

# SEVEN DAYS

## REAL ESTATE ISSUE



VERMONT'S INDEPENDENT VOICE MARCH 13-20, 2013 VOL. 18 NO. 28 SEVENDAYS.VT.COM

**INSIDE!**

36-page guide to the Green Mountain Film Festival

**HOME BUYING BHUTANESE**

Former refugees moving on up

PAGE 14

**\$1200 GETS YOU WHAT?**

Rating rentals around Vermont

PAGE 24





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## SAT 3/30 • 8PM LAUGHING LIBERALLY!

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## GO 'TOPPERS FRY RICE

### Newspaper Plays Defense After Offense

**S**t. Johnsbury's daily newspaper unintentionally made headlines last week. On Thursday the *Caledonian Record* printed a power sharing on the St. Johnsbury Academy Hightoppers who were vying with Burlington Blue High School for the Division I boys basketball title.

The postcard included the words "Fry Rice" written in a font resembling Chinese calligraphy. The paper also leaked a photo of the poster to Facebook and almost immediately began receiving comments from readers who thought it was racist. "WTY were they thinking," wrote one reader. "Yikes," wrote another. "Seems to be a full day of the paper today."

Injured the paper quickly sparked a spirited debate online. The internet blog Green Mountain Daily posted about it, instantanews.com writer Jon Rasmussen wrote an opinion entitled "WTY were they thinking tonight" after several of his readers e-mailed him the same question.

Then the *Green Mountain Journalists Association* weighed in, pointing out the "lack of understanding of the typeface and asking the *Caledonian Record* to 'publicly acknowledge its lapses in taste and judgment'."

*Caledonian Record* publisher Todd Smith actively attempted to brush off the criticism. "I'm sorry," he responded on the paper's Facebook page. But on Saturday the paper ran an editorial saying that it hadn't meant to offend. It stopped short of apologizing to readers, though, despite the numerous lengthy explanations of the offense offered online.

Hem to anti-racist activists: Time to start a fund-raising call and sensibility in the Northeast Kingdom?

Hem to sports fans: Don't eat the food, please.

#### The Caledonian Record

Q: How did the *Caledonian Record* come to publish a poster with the words "Fry Rice" in Chinese calligraphy?

A: The poster was a power sharing on the St. Johnsbury Academy Hightoppers who were vying with Burlington Blue High School for the Division I boys basketball title.

Q: How did the poster come to be published?

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### facing facts



#### OVER SHARED

Unintentional today and tonight, the *Caledonian Record* got caught up in the social media storm over the St. Johnsbury Academy Hightoppers. Who? It's a power sharing on the St. Johnsbury Academy Hightoppers who were vying with Burlington Blue High School for the Division I boys basketball title.



#### TAKE ATTENTION

The *Caledonian Record* got caught up in the social media storm over the St. Johnsbury Academy Hightoppers. Who? It's a power sharing on the St. Johnsbury Academy Hightoppers who were vying with Burlington Blue High School for the Division I boys basketball title.



#### ON POINT RELEVANCE

The Vermont Department of Health continues to monitor the health of the St. Johnsbury Academy Hightoppers. Who? It's a power sharing on the St. Johnsbury Academy Hightoppers who were vying with Burlington Blue High School for the Division I boys basketball title.



#### BOYS IN SHAMBOL

Because a 2011 greenfield, the *Caledonian Record* got caught up in the social media storm over the St. Johnsbury Academy Hightoppers. Who? It's a power sharing on the St. Johnsbury Academy Hightoppers who were vying with Burlington Blue High School for the Division I boys basketball title.

NO MORE CHANGES  
BUT WE CAN



# \$18.53

That's the hourly wage a Vermont resident needs to make to afford a lower apartment on the whole, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

### TOP FIVE

MOST POPULAR PHOTOS OF THE WEEK

1. "Would the House Pass Trans Endanger Women's Local Health Movement?" by *Caledonian Record*. Local health advocates react to the growing backlash against plastic.
2. "A Caledonian Record's Story: A Rocky Mountain Adventure" by *Caledonian Record*. Thanks to some quick thinking and a fortunate decision, *Caledonian Record* is now a Rocky Mountain Adventure while taking in the British Columbia landscape.
3. "When a War at City Hall: How's Burlington Mayor Mike Whelan Doing?" by *Caledonian Record*. A program report on how Burlington's first year as the *Caledonian Record*.
4. "Quickie Vermont: The *Caledonian Record*." by *Caledonian Record*. A quickie Vermont: The *Caledonian Record* is now a Rocky Mountain Adventure while taking in the British Columbia landscape.
5. "Side Effects: 'Solid' time to open *The Caledonian Record*." by *Caledonian Record*. The team behind the *Caledonian Record* and *Caledonian Record* plan to open a new business before the end of the year.

**tweet of the week:**

**WTSidePicks**  
We're looking for a RT of our tweet. We'd like to see a tweet from a Vermont resident who would support the *Caledonian Record*.

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and dairy farmers stuck in the 19th century, but, just as in any other progressive business, dairy has modernized.

The author does get one thing right: Dairy farmers are just as hardworking, dedicated and honorable as ever. Interestingly, however, she misses the point on "family owned." I wonder if the author could name one farmer on the scale, large or small, that isn't family owned. Farming is so expensive to enter into these days that in order for a new generation to join, farms have to expand. Larger farms actually offer new and work on a day off every now and then

Vermonters I don't share my local policy. Windham County Democratic primary voters put Shanahan in the corner office due to his strong support for closing Vermont Nukes.

Tom Fretaniwie  
STOWE

#### CHOOSE KIDS

Rep. Alison Clarkson does not realize taxpayer dollars are an investment in our youth — not back into the hands of corporations! (Put Name Vermont Students, School Choice involves a Trip



— something almost everyone else gets to enjoy. Unfortunately, like most unfarm-farmed people, the author assumes something over 50 years grating in the dairies is "radical" (disconnected milking)! Please! Farmers have used machines to milk cows since the 1940s. I believe it or not, most modern dairy barns are much more comfortable and humane than anything built before 1940.

Is everything great in dairy land? Of course not. There are many issues to address for animals and people. We need to take better care of Hispanic workers, although there are many who are happy and well-treated despite the characterization in the original article ("Milk Kids' Documentary Shows How Vermont Dairy Workers Get Milked," January 9). Praising the entire industry with such a broad brush, however, is misguided, misleading and just plain wrong.

Joe Klopfenstein  
WINDHAM

#### THE TRUTH ABOUT RACINE

Georg Racine lost to Peter Shanahan because he was killed in Windham County (New France, February 25). Our Peter Shanahan best Racine by over 3000 Windham votes. It was not because

to Canada," February 25). School choice is just that, a choice. We are investing in the future of Vermont, children's education should not be on the shopping block. Mr. Clarkson should go offer the problem of unemployment in our state. Headouts should be out — not school choice.

Rory Spence Butler  
COVINGTON

#### OH, CANADA

Kellyjo Flagg's article on school choice in Vermont's north makes useful points about Vermont's secondary options to

REBECCA B. FINE

#### SAY SOMETHING!

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MARCH 13-20, 2013 VOL. 18 NO. 28

LOOKING FORWARD



## We seem to have an unyielding interest in other people's nests.

For many, the subject boils down to dollars. And wise calls. If you're taking the word of **LUXURY FADS** Kathryn Flagg visited in Stowe. She and Ken Picard also found wildly varying samples of **WHAT SHOULD GET YOU?** in Vermont's rental housing. Kathryn also talked with **REDSHIRT**'s longtime partners who are going their separate ways, while Ken met some **Distances** who've gone from **REFUGEES TO HOMEOWNERS**. Kevin J. Kelley explored the prime real estate state in **BURLINGTON'S ROCK POINT** and for and out why **VERMONT'S FORECLOSURE RATE** is going up. Ginger Weiss mentored at **FREE IT YOUR HOME IT HOUSE** in St. Albans, and Margot Harmons chats up Kyle Scanlon who handles **WHAT WE LEAVE BEHIND** when we leave a home.

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Watch Vermont's **Brother of Charles** **Barndollar Farm**, finally looking green? Watch the archival episode of **Search in Vermont** from April, Ben Hollister visited a West Tread Farm and met some baby goats.



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## Bernie One-Note

**I**f Sen. **BERNIE SANDERS** sounds like a broken record, there's a clue by him. In fact, he says, serving as a veritable one-man message machine is a young part of his job.

"My wife tells me I talk about [the same issues] too much, and Pat [Johnny O'Connell, Sanders' dad] used to work during an interview in his Capitol Hill office. 'And I do know that people feel the way I think they feel again!'"

But there's a reason for the repetition, he says. "The poor, the working class, the sick and the elderly are being left behind, while wealthy individuals and corporations are taking larger and larger slices of the economic pie."

"Nobody understands how bad it is," he says. "That's why I think it's more on television or radio 24 hours a day saying nothing else other than that, it would be a contribution."

If obesity is the Vermont independent's goal, then he's certainly succeeding. Recently done a news cycle pass without Bernie's mug appearing on MSNBC, it's live shot from the Capital.

Each performance is the same as the last. Sanders, glasses — trying to look friendly, but usually looking bored — until the anchor starts up long enough for him to bring off a dose of facts and figures backing up his claims of growing economic inequality.

Sanders' conservatism is even more complete in the social media arena. Only five answers — most of which have run for president or are planning to — have more Facebook followers than Sanders' nearly 200,000, according to social-media pundit OMBly Guy And only three — Sen. **JOHN INGRAN** (R-AZ), **HARRY REID** (R-NV) and **RANDI MIA** (R-KY) — have more Twitter followers than his 34,000.

To begin, Sanders' 140-character dispatches have been reposted 19,000 times in the past year, far surpassing the next-closest senatorial contender: Paul's 100,000 retweets. And his YouTube channel has reached 24 million video views. Within hours, a typical Sanders Facebook post will yield hundreds of "likes" and comments, many in the effort of, "Go, Bernie!"

"I'm trying to raise a voice above the mass media," the senator explains.

All that exposure has been good for Sanders' political bottom line. During his last reelection effort — a doubling last November of Republican **CHRIS MACHOVER** — Sanders managed to raise

\$5.2 million in 146,660 mostly small-dollar contributions from a nationwide network of donors.

Now two months into his second term, Sanders appears to be reinventing his steady rise in seniority — he ranks 47th in the 100-member body — and a new assignment that came with it: chairmanship of the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs. It's the first time in his 22 years in Congress that he's been tasked with running a full committee.

"I realize it's a very, very time-consuming job. It's something I've excited about," Sanders said in a subdued voice, sitting on a couch in his Dirksen Senate Office Building suite.

**TODAY MY GOAL IN LIFE IS TO THOROUGHLY BORE YOU — IT IS FRANKLY NOT SEXY TV STUFF.**

SEN. BERNIE SANDERS

"What you have in the Veterans Administration is an entity that has a \$160 billion budget. What's the budget of Vermont? Five or six billion? It's the largest single uninsured health care system in the United States of America."

Sanders' top priority on the campaign is to clear a claims backlog to the Department of Veterans Affairs stemming from a dozen years of war and recent federal recognition of Agent Orange exposure in Vietnamese vets. Nearly 900,000 veterans are waiting for their claims to be processed, while 70 percent of claims have been pending for more than 125 days, according to the VA.

"The good news is that they are now processing about a million a year, which is far more than they used to. The bad news is, they've got a big backlog," he says.

Last you think Sanders' new job has distracted him from his momentous focus on economic justice, it has not. Further, Sanders is using his new bully pulpit to joust with the more old warlords.

Case in point? A proposal unveiled by the White House and other Washington centrists to charge the Federal Reserve to calculate fiscal security cost-of-living adjustments. While federal lawmakers argue that the so-called "indexed

CPI" is necessary to reduce the growth of entitlement spending, progressives say it'll simply screw the elderly.

In the past month, Sanders has carefully used his committee duty to hammer home the point that a chained CPI would also hit 3.2 million disabled veterans and 380,000 survivors. And he's enlisted the help of seemingly conservative allies — including the leaders of veterans groups — to make his progressive case.

Sanders' relationship with Washington Democrats remains fraught. Though he argued in favor of a primary challenge to President **BARACK OBAMA** in July 2011, he campaigned for the president's reelection in New Hampshire last fall.

"I'm disappointed but not surprised," Sanders says of the first few months of Obama's second term, citing agreement with the president on gay rights and immigration issues and disagreement on economic policy.

Likewise, Sanders is quick to criticize congressional Democrats though he continues to caucus with the party's Senate majority.

"I don't think you have much of an option," he says. "That's the way the system is. I was able to champion a major [for healthcare] outside of that, but when you're here, you need a caucus."

Sanders appears charged first in the National Journal's annual ideological rankings of the Senate, he closed in as the 52nd most liberal member of the body — according to the right of Vermont's once fervent defender, Democrat **BARBARA LIBART**, who came in at 34.

"Why is that? Because the assumption is what the Democrats want is liberal, as someone with a 300 percent voting record with the Democrats is the most liberal," Sanders says. "I vote against a lot of those proposals because I don't think they're good for us."

But that's not the whole story. Despite his bellicose rhetoric, Sanders tends to vote in favor of major Democratic initiatives — from health care reform to the late-senior New York's Day deal to avert the fiscal cliff — only to rail against their shortcomings later.

"What you're voting on is a very rarely something that's really good," he explains. "Trust me, you could say no to every piece of legislation that comes down here and justify it. On the other hand, that's kind of irresponsible."

Sanders' loquaciousness has its limits. When the conversation shifts



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away from broad-and-butter economic issues, his answers become cant. On the issue of gun violence, he is particularly tight-lipped. Indeed, he refused to grant an interview to *Seven Days* on the subject for two and a half months after last December's deadly school shooting in Newtown, Conn.

That could be because Sanders — who first won election to the U.S. House where the National Rifle Association targeted his Republican opponent — has largely opposed federal firearm laws, ceding gun control to state for states to decide. His position seemed to shift in January, when he submitted to a written statement that he'd support federal bans on assault weapons and high-capacity clips proposed by Obama.

But in last week's interview, he seemed to back away again from such measures, saying, "If you passed the strongest gun control legislation tomorrow, I don't think it will have a profound effect on the tragedies we have seen."

Asked whether he'd vote for an assault-weapon ban if it reached the Senate floor, he said, "We'll see. We'll see what other things it is part of."

"What other things it is part of?"

"That is something we're looking at as well," he said.

Asked why he was on the fence about the assault-weapon ban, which he backed in 1998, Sanders interrupted rudely, saying, "That is not one of my major issues. It's an issue out there. I've told you how I feel about it. If there's anything else you want to ask me about, I'm happy to answer. That's about it."

Five minutes after the grand session had begun, Johnny One-Note wanted to get back to tax policy and economic disparity.

Back in Burlington five days later, Sanders was in similar form. After calling a press conference at his Church Street district office, Sanders told a group of four television reporters, one online reporter and one print reporter precisely what they didn't want to hear.

"Today my goal in life is to thoroughly bore you and deal with what is an issue of extraordinary importance, but it is frankly not easy 'TV stuff,'" he said. "It deals with the budget."

Setting between two social service agency directors, Sanders passionately declared the effect the \$1.5 billion budget sequester would have on Vermont's poor and working class. "Passionately" meaning, in this case, that he was red-faced and practically shouting halcyon through his nostrils.

Asked later in the press conference what he thought about Sen. Paul's 12-hour filibuster last week, Sanders seemed unimpressed — even though it outlasted Sanders' own 4.5-hour diatribe in December 2011 against tax breaks for the wealthy.

"Obviously I disagree with Sen. Paul. He's an extraordinarily conservative guy," the Vermont independent said, before quickly agreeing to the need for filibuster reform.

Paul's speech, of course, focused on his hyperbolic concern that the Obama administration might be willing to kill American terrorist suspects in domestic drone strikes, as it has abroad. Sanders himself cited the administration's drone program in his justification last Thursday for changing his mind at the last minute and opposing Obama's CIA director nominee.

Asked so clearly whether he disagreed with the Kennedy nominee, Sanders said, "Well, Sen. Paul is — well, he spoke for 12 hours. I'm not going to go into everything," before turning to WCAX's **NEWS NOW** program for another question on the topic at hand.

When *Seven Days* attempted to ask a third time, Sanders abruptly ended the press conference after just 20 minutes, saying, "I've gotta — I've got a plane to catch. You've had about four questions." Starting from his seat, he said, "OK. Thank you all very much."

After Johnny One-Note left the room, *Seven Days* asked **BAN MCLEAN** — Sanders' Vermont press secretary and a former *Burlington Free Press* reporter — why the senator wouldn't answer such a basic, inoffensive question.

"I think he wanted to talk about what he wanted to talk about," McLean explained.

Indeed.

In a follow-up email, chief spokesman **MICHAEL BRIGGS** clarified that Sanders believes Paul "is an extremely conservative senator who often panders to his right-wing base."

Mirror, mirror, on the wall?

Helpfully, Briggs added, "No, Bernice does not agree with Sen. Paul that President Obama is going to attack Sen. President with drones." ☺

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# Vermont Bhutanese Graduate From Being Renters to Homeowners — and Landlords

BY KEN PICARD

**F**ive years ago, Megarth Neupane was one of 10,000 Bhutanese living in an overcrowded refugee camp in north-east Nepal. He and his family were huddled up in a tiny shack with a leaky plastic roof and no electricity or indoor plumbing.

Today, you could say 33-year-old Neupane is living the American dream. He owns a \$180,000 duplex in Woodstock with his wife, Chhulu Maya, a 9-year-old daughter, Prashu, and 18-month-old son, Prasen. The rent he gets from the second unit, which houses 11 more Bhutanese refugees, covers the mortgage and property taxes for the entire building.

The Neupanes closed on their home on April 16, 2011, and have already paid down nearly half the \$128,000 mortgage.

What's the secret to their mid-estate success?

"I strongly believe in sincerity, hard work, education... practicality," says Neupane, who teaches at Kearsarge and uses skills as a pharmacy technician at Fletcher Allen Health Care in Burlington. Being "friendly to everybody, especially our own culture."

Neupane studies others, and it's easy to see why. It's part of a growing population of Bhutanese in Vermont who are transitioning from being renters to being homeowners. Some, like Neupane, are even starting to buy investment properties. More income is only part of the motivation, Neupane insists to be as a participant in helping more recent immigrants get established.

"Typically, when people are forced to flee their homeland, they lose their houses and virtually all their possessions," says Judy Scott, executive director of the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program. "This instills a great respect for the value and security of owning a home in a democracy, where the right to own property cannot be abridged."

Neither VERP nor its parent organization, the U.S. Commission on Refugee and Immigrant Status, keep statistics on home-ownership rates among the immigrants they resettle, but while all refugee groups struggle hard to acculturate into American culture and put down roots, anecdotal evidence suggests the Bhutanese have proven especially successful in real-estate endeavors. They're accomplished that, the explains, by paying their roommates, keeping extended families under one roof and practicing extreme frugality.



Prashu, Megarth, Prasen and Chhulu Maya Neupane

On a recent visit to the Neupane home, we sat on their livingroom divining chair and sipping bowls of spicy Bhutanese soup made a long instant Ramen noodle. On this particular afternoon, both Megarth and Chhulu Maya were home, which they noted is unusual. On most days, the couple works at their respective jobs outside the home while a parent watches their toddler son.

Neupane, who's one of four brothers, isn't the only member of his family to own a home. In the last year, a younger brother built a new house in Colchester.

"We don't work for seven days and spend for a night," Neupane says, referring to the family's food discipline. They always eat home-cooked meals, never buy alcohol and don't spend "penny" on "unnecessary things."

As Neupane conducted a tour of his home, he explained that his immediate family occupies the much smaller side of the duplex. Built in 2007, the house is cozy and modern, with an attached basement, an entire kitchen and three bedrooms on the second floor. Neupane's daughter

has her own room, but the baby sleeps in the master bedroom. A third bedroom is a guest room, where the Neupanes occasionally host newly arrived refugees, both Bhutanese and Iraqi, until they find permanent housing.

Next door, Neupane shared the other half of the duplex — a two-story unit that serves as a rental in comparison to his own. It includes a large entry kitchen, three bathrooms and a separate living room. Updates, five large bedrooms with high ceilings are shared by 11 members of an extended Bhutanese family. Most work at work, except for a son of grandparents, their daughter and an infant grandson. Unable to communicate in English, they were tested in front of a large TV watching a VCR tape of a traditional Bhutanese dance.

Neupane was 11 — and had learned English in kindergarten — when his family was kicked out of Bhutan. His spent 26 years in a refugee camp but still managed to earn bachelor's degrees in both chemistry and education at a nearby university in Nepal.

Prepared as he was, Neupane knew he'd have to remake himself in America.

"I came to United States with hope I can do a lot better," he says. "When I came back to Nepal, I knew USA doesn't just mean 'United States of America' but 'U.S. Start Ages.'"

Immediately after their arrival, the Neupanes lived with a Vermont family for about a week before moving into an apartment in Burlington's Old North End. Despite two decades of refugee camp living, the condition of the property came as a shock.

"I cannot forget that apartment for my life. It was so ugly," Neupane recalls, referring to the bedbugs, mice and cockroaches that infested the place. "It was totally opposite of my imagination of what America would be."

Was it better or worse than the refugee camps? "Both have pain and love," he says.

Despite a popular misconception, resettled refugees receive housing assistance for only a few months. For those who want to buy their own homes, there are no preferential deals or federal assistance programs that help them obtain mortgages at a lower-than-market rate.

Like most new Americans, Neupane didn't have a credit history. Early on,





however, he heeded the advice of friends and advisors at VSRP and applied for a credit card — his first-ever form of personal identification.

"I really worked hard building up the credit," Neupane explains. Today, he says, he repays his own loans to do the same. An employer pays part a small portion of their income in rent, they too, are able to get away money.

A fewer miles away, Laila Adhikari, 32, welcomes a visitor into his large house in Burlington's New North End. Adhikari, 32, was born in Bhutan in the same village in Nepal. The oldest of five children, he lived there for seven years until the government imprisoned his father, a lawyer, for being a Hindu.

"I had to take care of everything when my dad was put in prison," Adhikari recalls. "The government wouldn't release him until we say we're happy to leave the country."

Adhikari spent 20 years in a refugee camp in Nepal before moving to the United States. He arrived on June 2, 2008, with little more than the clothes on his back and 30 Nepalese rupees in his pocket — about one dollar.

Four years later, on June 6, 2012, Adhikari closed on a spacious house on about a quarter acre, where he lives with six other family members: his wife, parents, brother, sister and 2-year-old son. The family bought the house by pooling their resources. His mother is the only family member who doesn't work outside the home, she stays home to watch her grandson.

"The Bhutanese have their heritage of families living together and feeding the resources to help each other," says Adhikari, who paid \$200,000 for the house. "That helps as a little bit, with all of us working together to buy a house."

Back in Nepal, Adhikari was a mathematics and science teacher. But because his college degree isn't recognized in the United States, his first job in Vermont was working dishes at Top Job restaurant in Winooski. One day his brother and sister stopped by to visit him at his new job.

"When they saw me, they started crying," he recalls. "I had a good job in my country, so they thought I'd got the same kind of job over here." Adhikari quit after one week and found another job at 1854 Lane, with his family's help, he bought an Indian grocery in Winooski, which he sold after two years to help pay for his home. Today he works at the Kona Foods factory in Burlington with several other family members. While the work isn't what he trained for in Nepal, Adhikari says, "It's better than before."

Jane Battisone, a real estate agent with REMAX North in Colchester, has helped nearly a dozen Bhutanese families buy their first homes. Battisone doesn't represent either the Nepalese or the Adhikaris but says their stories are consistent with other Bhutanese clients she's had, who have purchased property in Stowe Junction, Burlington, Winooski and Colchester.

"They're such hard workers — oh, my gosh!" she says. "They'll cash two or three jobs, whatever it takes, to save up to get their own home."

Battisone, who first connected with the Bhutanese community about five years ago when she and her husband became VSRP volunteers, notes that these families are providing an invaluable service to Chittenden County's housing market by moving up the real-estate chain, thereby making more rentals available to immigrants who have arrived more recently.

Indeed, while Neupane was showing off his Winooski duplex, he received a telephone call from his real estate agent about an investment property which he planned to rent later that afternoon. "Unexpectedly, he said, he hopes to become a full-time property manager."

His goal isn't to cash, Neupane said, but "prestigious" within his community. "I don't want to be a landlord," he added emphatically. "I just want to be someone who helps my community."

## EVEN BACK IN NEPAL, I KNEW USA DOESN'T MEAN "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA," BUT "U START AGAIN."

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# Divide and Conquer? Redstone Developers End a 22-Year Partnership

BY KATHRYN FLAGG

**A**fter more than two decades as business partners, two of Burlington's most influential developers and real estate brokers are going their separate ways.

Even if you don't know their names, Doug Noble and Larry Williams and their firm, Redstone Commercial Group, have had a major impact on Chittenden County. They redeveloped the Cheese Mill on the Winooski River and revitalized new historic districts along the river. The duo turned the burned-out remains of the Super Cheese plant in Winooski into a multi-use food and agricultural hub. In 2007, Noble and Williams bought Ballou Valley skis and together their biggest undertaking to date — the \$10 million Redstone Lofts student residence — opened last summer with 403 beds at the University of Vermont.

Redstone has plenty of projects in the pipeline, too. It's breaking the Kirtland historic apartment complex in Winooski, where 72 units will come on the market in August. Come May the firm plans to break ground on a new hotel in the so-called 70 Stack Block at the corner of Main and St. Paul streets in Burlington. The \$10 million, 120-room hotel will incorporate the historic Armory at 600 Main, capturing a decade-long renovation of the well-regarded city block.

Redstone currently houses 700 residential tenants in the greater Burlington area and manages roughly 15 million square feet of office and residential space — home to 150 businesses. Over the last five years, the company has acquired or developed approximately \$40 million in real estate.

Williams and Noble are diplomatic when they talk about their split, which Williams termed an "amiable separation," both say it's simply time to pursue their own careers. Williams is buying out Noble's share in Redstone in a deal that will close by the end of the month. Noble is steering up Noble Red Estate. The pair will continue to share ownership in some 30 Vermont properties, including Dolans.

The breakup did come as "a bit of a surprise," concedes Michael Monte, the chief operating and financial officer at the Chittenden Building Trust, Monte directed Burlington's Community and Economic Development Office from 1989 to 2003 and again from 2009 to 2017, it was at that time that he first worked with Williams and Noble.

"They've been a strong, long-term kind of developer, and that's good to have," says Monte. "It's good to have folks who don't



Larry Williams and Doug Noble

**OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS, REDSTONE HAS ACQUIRED OR DEVELOPED APPROXIMATELY \$40 MILLION IN REAL ESTATE. NOW THE PARTNERS ARE SPLITTING UP.**

want to get in, get out, and you never see them again."

James Kelly, former assistant director for economic development at CEDO, points out that Redstone's commitment has gone beyond hotels and mortar investments. "They were part of the renaissance of what Burlington could be," says Kelly, who worked with Redstone to encourage Dolans to move into a former brick bottle factory the firm redeveloped as Pine Street. "It's not just putting up a building. It's about quality of life. It's been a generation of effort, and they've been part of it."

"I think they raised the bar for the type of projects that they did," agrees Yves Bradley, the head of commercial brokerage at Powerline Real Estate. "By virtue of the fact that they were both from the greater Burlington area" — Williams and Noble grew up in Shelburne and both graduated from UVM — "they brought a unique

vision of and understanding of our market, and where the market could progress."

Karen Fries, CEDO's assistant director for housing and neighborhood revitalization, praises the pair for their commitment to downtown, mixed-use development, several big Redstone projects have focused on what's known as "infill" development, which taps underutilized buildings as sites in an urban setting. Inset growth advocates consider it essential to revitalizing downtown.

Redstone is also versatile. "Home developers go out and do housing, housing, housing, housing, in retail buildings, retail buildings, retail buildings," says Noble. "I like doing a bit of everything, repurposing older buildings, historic rehab, developing condominiums, developing apartments."

Inhabitants in Burlington's real estate industry say it's too soon to know how the Redstone split will alter the region's brokerage and development landscape.

Williams says the client experience won't change much, but the firm will soon have to decide whether to grow outside of Vermont.

"Over the last 21 years I've worked incredibly hard building the Redstone brand and its integrity, and I think it's in a great position right now. Hopefully Larry will continue in good will," says Noble, adding that he has a stake in the company's past success. "I have a significant part of my net worth under management by Redstone."

Will Noble be poaching any Redstone clients? That remains to be seen, he points out that real estate is a business built on relationships. In his new venture, Noble says he's looking forward to fostering an aquaintance, development and commercial brokerage. His new company will manage a 21,000-square-foot office building in Hinesburg Road, as well as the 90,000-square-foot City Center complex in Montpelier, which Noble owns individually.

"We approach things in different ways, and that has resulted in a very productive partnership that's accomplished a lot over our life," says Williams, looking back on the 22-year partnership. "Now we're past a point where we like the idea of seeing what we can accomplish on our own." ☐



# Why Foreclosures Are Up in Vermont

BY KEVIN J. KELLEY

**E**ven as the national foreclosure crisis appears to be easing, Vermont is experiencing a spike in legal filings by mortgage lenders seeking to take title to homes whose owners have fallen behind in their payments.

Vermont's foreclosure rate has ranked as one of the lowest in the country in the years since the 2008 financial meltdown put millions of Americans in jeopardy of losing their homes. Today, the state is an outlier once again — for the opposite reason. Nationally, foreclosure filings fell by 24 percent last year, in Vermont, they increased 33 percent.

The number of foreclosures cases had fallen in Vermont in two consecutive years since peaking at 1924 in 2009. There were 1250 filings in 2011, but the total suddenly soared to 1624 in 2012.

What accounts for the sharp increase?

Vermonters familiar with the foreclosure process suggest it's a product of a delay in filings by mortgage lenders who held off on lawsuits against some of their previous borrowers through debt-counseling.

"The decline we saw was basically a false decline," says line Attorneys, director of Vermont Legal Aid. "National banks engaged in settlement negotiations relating to their bad practices weren't doing large numbers of new filings."

Thomas Condon, the state's deputy commissioner of banking offers a similar explanation. "Filings that could have been done earlier are happening now, but I think it will start to wane as we go through this year," he says.

Vermont's current counter-cyclical trend could reflect a surge in new filings by the Big Five national mortgage lenders, Bank of America, Citigroup, GMAC/ Ally, JP Morgan Chase and Wells Fargo. They may have moved earlier and more conservatively in states with much larger numbers of loan delinquencies. It might also

be that the Big Five are playing catch up in Vermont.

But officials aren't sure. The Vermont Department of Financial Regulation doesn't compile statistics on which entities are pursuing foreclosures, Condon says.

He does observe, however, that Vermont lending institutions are much less likely to launch foreclosure actions than are the Big Five. "Vermont banks and credit unions are hand-holding, trying to help people who fall behind," he says.

Attitudes also cite "a tremendous difference between Vermont bank mortgages and national bank mortgages."

In comparison to the loosey-goosey terms offered in the previous decade by subprime lenders, Vermont-based creditors "often required more of borrowers and had personal relationships with borrowers," Attorneys notes. "So Legal Aid, we rarely get involved with cases involving Vermont banks."

Some foreclosures cases in Vermont are "just heart-wrenching," Condon says. Medical bills, job losses and marital issues are the leading causes of loan delinquencies leading to foreclosure proceedings, he says.

Take the case of one client of Joanne Radford's. The Vermont Legal Aid attorney tells of a Chittenden County homeowner who developed cancer and had to undergo surgery and chemotherapy, resulting in whopping bills and the loss of her job. The woman was threatened with foreclosure until Legal Aid helped her enter a federally sponsored mediation process that can reduce mortgage interest rates and stretch out payment periods. The woman was able to keep her home as a result, Radford reports.

An unknown number of Vermonters have not been so fortunate. Condon says the state does not know how many of the 10,772 foreclosure filings since 2005 actually forced Vermonters into homelessness. ☐



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away close to the Canadian border ("The Seven Vermont Academics, School Closures Involve a Trip to Canada," February 20).

One of her observations, however, needs further consideration: the proposal to prohibit the use of our taxpayer dollars to send our students to out-of-state schools. This idea is short-sighted and works against the interests of many of our students and taxpayers alike on at least two counts: first and foremost, our money is best spent when it delivers a high-quality education, ergo, our best response to the challenges presented by schools such as Stinson should be to provide a better school system right here in Vermont second, we need to realize that a large portion of our education tax dollars in towns along the border come straight from Canada. If we in the small towns of North Hero alone, we collect over \$200,000 in school taxes from properties owned by Canadians every year. Telling these seasonal neighbors and friends and customers that we want their cash but not their children is just plain dumb.

I congratulate our legislature on its wise decision to allow our students to seek out the best education value for the dollar wherever that education may be offered.

Bert Wilcox  
NORTH HERO

## UNION LABEL

I am writing to support the feed back from Anne's Majors [Feedback, February 20] concerning Barbara Vucari and Gerdland College ("Principals Appeal," February 10). In a capitalist society like ours, the class struggle within bourgeois ideological apparatus like colleges is real. Vucari's repeated actions to suppress the staff union and to drop teachers input into program-contracting policies demonstrate that her implied socialist "social compass" is one she doesn't have to last.

Paul Germanotta  
PLATTENBURG, N.Y.

## WHITHER WHEAT?

I read Whither Bely, and Dr. Davis did more than ask patients to grow up with ("The Trouble With Wheat," March 6). He himself had blood-sugar issues and experimented with eating different wheat products while testing his blood sugar. He reasoned that modern wheat caused his blood sugar to rise much longer than Einkorn wheat, an older variety. Forty percent of the population has the genes making them prone to Type

2 Diabetes (T2D). According to the Human Genome Project, there are at least 100 different adaptations that lead to T2D.

That is why I have cut back on wheat. Not only do I feel better, I stopped getting cancer spots. Dr. Davis doesn't mention this perk. If I indulge in more wheat than usual, they come back but go away quickly because I eat less wheat now. I also get abdominal cramping from eating regular pasta.

My concern is that others will read



this article and be dissuaded of people who have legitimate issues. I'm disappointed if personally when a breed baker tried to tell me that wheat's not an issue. For me, it is.

I think those who sell wheat products should consider using older varieties.

Whether wheat went bad through hybridization or genetic engineering, it is shocking to go from 1 to 3000 having gluten intolerance to 210 in 2000. Something happened.

Joseph Hefel  
BURLINGTON

## GUNS R US?

In "Is 'To Franklin County, a Lethal Arms Dealer Quietly Makes a Killing," January 22] the Vermonters gride ourselves in being both very lax gun laws and very low rates of gun crime. We have the 21st lowest rate of gun death among the 50 states, and the third most permissive gun laws. What we fail to appreciate, however, is that we have the 19th highest rate of gun experts used in crime, according to the Mayors Against Illegal Guns' September 2000 *Trace the Guns* report. Apparently, Century Arms is a major source of those guns, in that really the kind of business we want in Vermont!

Robert Byrnes  
WARREN

## SUPPORT WIND

I'm writing in response to ["Do Vermonters Really Support Ridgepole Wind Power?" *Passing the Polls*, January 25]. The article cites three separate polls within the last year that showed the majority of Vermonters supporting wind projects in the state, at percentages of 75, 65 and 58. Authors Andy Bromberg and Kathryn Flagg write, "Conventional wisdom might suggest that wind opponents are a small but vocal minority of Vermonters," and go on to cover

description. I recently read about neighbors opposed to a multiunit residential development who took their case to the Vermont Supreme Court. These project opponents were emotionally invested, had identified the project as fundamentally wrong and wanted solely to stop that project.

That description also fits the vocal opponents of wind-energy projects in Vermont. Virtually every substantive issue they raise in opposition can be answered by either data driven research or thoughtful and appropriate sign restrictions. Yet they continue to dismiss the facts — mostly on the basis that they just don't believe them. Their dismissal of polling data showing strong support for wind power in Vermont is just the latest in a long line of facts they brush aside.

Climate change is bearing down on us and we have to change our energy ways. Wind power has an important role to play as part of the solution for Vermont's energy future, along with conservation, efficiency, solar and hydro. The majority of Vermonters understand this.

Linda Gray  
ACRANCH

## FIRST BT...

The fact that Burlington Telecom might be sold to a corporation proves a very real point about trying to liberal public and private ownership ("Can a Ridgepole Drive Save Burlington Telecom From Corporate Takeover?" January 20). That point is that corporate capitalism (or monopoly capitalism, to be correct) does not exist to serve the community, only to maximize profits. When this motivation is combined with political leaders who only see the bottom line and have few qualms about selling off publicly owned properties, goods and services in order to look good now (the future be damned), the common is heading toward ruin.

If the original plan to create a publicly owned telecommunications system in Burlington had been fulfilled, there would be no CityCorp taking Burlington to court and no corporate anxiety/city council cowardly selling (instead, corporate capitalism (primarily in the form of the discredited Adelphi corporation) used another corporation, convinced legislators (which wish) to vote down the publicly owned plan and mirror on private investment. Now, what could have been an example of community operated and community-owned telecommunications looks like it will end up being just another corporate cable/Internet scam.

With out it the mayor is thinking about selling Burlington Telecom to a corporation, could Burlington Electric be behind?

Joe Jacobs  
BURLINGTON

## WELCOME TO NIMBYLAND

In "Do Vermonters Really Support Ridgepole Wind Power?" *Passing the Polls*, January 25]. I was reminded of a

Paul Smith  
BURLINGTON





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## Castleton State College Adds a New Art Gallery Down the Road — in Rutland

BY PAMELA POLSTON

What's going on in Rutland? No sooner had the venerable **CHARLES ART CENTER** opened a satellite gallery, the **CHARLES BOWENSON ART CENTER**, than Castleton College followed suit. This Friday the **CURTISSON BOWENSON GALLERY** holds a reception for its inaugural show of works by Castleton art faculty.

"This Charles is great, but it's the only gallery in town," says **ALA RAMAGE**, director of visual arts programs at Castleton. "It would be good for Rutland if there is more than one — hopefully there will be more than two."

We can also hope that future galleries will avoid repeating the week "down-town" in their names. As it is, the Charles and Castleton "down-town" are just around the corner from each other, on Merchants Row and Center Street Alley, respectively. In fact, the two are cooperatively presenting a current art-and-talk series.

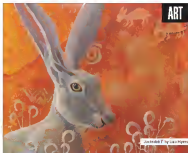
Both locations are positioned to benefit from a sprawling neighborhood development called Center Street Marketplace. Whimsy planned as an interior courtyard park that will allow surrounding shops, restaurants and other businesses — including the Castleton downtown gallery — to "walk three blocks down their front door" to Downtown Rutland Partnership executive director **MIKE COPPINGER** puts it. The project is scheduled to break ground this spring, according to Ramage.

An accessible art gallery sounds like an apt addition to that urban park space. But why in Castleton, footing the bill for a Rutland venue some 30 miles from the college's heart? **THE CURTISSON BOWENSON GALLERY** enough?

"Most people don't travel very far to look at art," Ramage says. "We have a good gallery on campus, but it's predominantly appreciated by college people." He suggests the additional exposure to artists will be good for both the college and the community. In addition, Ramage notes, Castleton's president, **DAVE WILK**, "is from Rutland and has been interested in getting more involved in the town — [He wants] a real and viable presence in downtown."

Indeed, under Wilk's presidency the college has purchased and renovated Richard's Spartan Arms, has created a community outdoor art role, and sends students to town to volunteer for the city's nonprofit. "We have a five-year lease on the [Downtown Gallery] property and are exploring other ways to integrate our growing performing arts programs at the **PARADISE THEATRE** as well," Wilk writes in an email. He echoes Ramage's comment that investing in the town benefits the college and community, too.

In bringing more art to the far reaches of Rutland, the Castleton Downtown will have one distinct advantage over a commercial gallery. "We're



Illustrated by the artist

not totally dependent on selling art, so we can experiment," suggests Ramage.

Whether the venue will get all wild and crazy remains to be seen, but for now its three-month quarters are hosting 40 works by 33 accomplished faculty members. Ramage says both on- and off-campus galleries will likely continue to present "mostly regional" artists.

The original Charles, housed as a great Queen Anne Victorian on South Main Street, exhibits works primarily by local artists but is closed for a few months for renovations. The downtown gallery's exhibit, "Full House," on view through March 23, assembles painters **KATHLEEN LAVERGNE**, **IRIAN STANISLOV**, **DICK WEE** and **JENNIFER DUCHESNE TORON** in the visual-art equivalent, presumably, of a very good hand in cards. The

Charles is also home to the **RUTLAND AREA ART ASSOCIATION**, which takes art outdoors with its annual Art in the Park weekend fest in August and October.

The rumor that Vermont has more visual artists per capita than any other state may or may not be true, but these are certainly enough to populate any number of new galleries in Rutland and around the state. *Wagons on!*

**Castleton Faculty Exhibition** Castleton Courtyard Gallery Center Street Alley Rutland. Reception: March 8, 8 to 10 p.m. Through May 8. Info: 888-266-7744. "Full House" Paintings by four Vermont artists. Charles Bowenston Art Center Rutland. Through March 23. Info: 775-235-6556. [charlesartcenter.org](http://charlesartcenter.org)

## APE LIT

When **KIM AND STERLING MACQUEEN** moved to Burlington Vt. from Florida last summer, Steve got all the media attention as new artistic director of the **FLUORIDE PARK THEATRE**. **THE PERFORMING ARTS** (I took Kim, a writer, a bit longer to make her mark, but she brought with her a diverse résumé that included work as a political/educational/crime reporter, lab researcher and writer or editor of everything from legal publications to magazines to *Champlain College*, and (full disclosure) has occasionally contributed to *Seven Days*).

Next week, Kim MacQueen furthers "outs" herself in her new community with a discussion of her debut novel, **OUT, OUT, A NOVEL OF WOMEN AND APES**. The title alone is likely to attract attention. Out, Out, A Novel of Women and Apes. MacQueen's protagonist is a new mom with "postpartum depression, a tedious marriage and



a career in free-fall" describes a release from Phoenix. But things pick up — and twist and turn — when she takes a job in a university laboratory that works with "language-competent apes" and is run by a brilliant but flawed primate biologist.

It's a unique plot, and one that "puts both apes and humans under the microscope," according to a reviewer on *IndieReader.com*. *Color as mfg read!*

PAMELA POLSTON

### KIM MACQUEEN

Tuesday, March 16, 5:30 p.m. at PhoenixBooks Burlington. Out, Out, A Novel of Women and Apes. Jumbo Books, 212 pages. \$15 paperback. Also available as an e-book. [kimmacqueen.com](http://kimmacqueen.com)



# A UVM Classicist Employs Greek and Latin to Tell a Timeless Story — as Opera

BY AMY LILLY

**A**mericans are writing and interpreting—sounding opera all the time. In the last five years alone, operas about Walt Disney and John Brown have premiered, and a week-based on author Annie Proulx's story "Brokeback Mountain" will be sung next year.

Of course, these operas are usually in English. But **NEON KAISAR**, associate professor and chair of the classics department at the University of Vermont, and Oregon-based music professor John Peel were apparently looking for a bigger challenge. They decided to write an opera about Nero in the languages the first-century Roman emperor actually spoke: Greek and Latin.

Selections from *Neon Kaiser* will premiere this week at Williams College in Salina, Ore., where Peel is composer-in-residence and Usher will teach. The title is a transliteration of Nero's name as it appears in Greek.

An opera in one ancient language and another dead one? Usher, the librettist, says the rarity of the enterprise was part of the draw. He previously collaborated with Peel on an opera written in Latin, *Yucca Kyrhaneis*, which was based on Virginia Arnold and premiered in 1999. "We always wanted to collaborate again," Usher says by phone, "and we thought Greek would be good because it hasn't really been done before."

That is, aside from the efforts of two other brave souls he can think of: Greek native Mikis Theodorakis, who scored *Antichrist* (Greek) in the mid-1970s (not to mention scenic films including *Zorba the Greek*), and the Pulitzer Prize-winning American composer Elliott Carter, who was reportedly working on a Sapphic song cycle before he died last November. "And us," Usher adds.

The *Shakespeare* incident says Greek both ancient Greek and classical Latin — "which is not clearly Latin," he specifies. The singers' not so much. Other phenomena the libretto and libretto with the performers to ensure they could at least pronounce their parts. "It was really quite an amazing experience to hear those speaking Greek, even though they didn't know what they were saying," he recalls.

Ancient languages aside, *Neon Kaiser* is surprisingly relevant to



current American culture. While Nero's life seems tailor-made for opera — the despot murdered his half-brother (with whom he had an incestuous relationship) and two wives before committing suicide at age 30 — Usher chose to focus on his "vulnerability" as a singer, poet and musician who played the kithara, a large lyre.

Nero longed for fame in the musical world of his time, and his obsession is evident in its ironic contrast to Americans' infatuation with celebrity singers today, according to program notes. One scene features an "American Idol"-like competition between Nero and other soloists who sing poems by Sappho, Alcaeus and others from the Hellenic repertoire that was popular to 35 A.D.

"Nero never wanted to be emperor," Usher explains, noting that the maker was crowned at age 17. "He just wanted to be the equivalent of a modern rock star with his modern boy band."

Usher hopes the opera will one day be staged in Vermont, but it's not the language barrier that makes that unlikely. As the composer points out regrettably, "it takes a lot of money to put on an opera."

The recording of the Williams College premiere of *Neon Kaiser* will be posted at Williams College's library of libretto arts website following the performance on Wednesday March 13. [www.libraryoflibrettoarts.org/performance/ops\\_neonkaiser2013/](http://www.libraryoflibrettoarts.org/performance/ops_neonkaiser2013/)

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# STATEofTHEarts

## A New Vermont Enterprise Aims to Put Artworks on Nonprofits' Walls

BY PAMELA POLSTON

ART



Home Farm, Gloucester, by Frank Strada

Central Vermont artist **JANET VAN FLEET** likes to make things happen. She cofounded **Home's Shared Place Arts**, where she maintains a studio. She cofounded, with the late Steve Kowdy, the **SHARED ART BUREAU**, which is a active working artist who produces found-object sculptures and installations, with a steady stream of exhibitions to her credit. And she's an occasional blogger. But apparently Van Fleet had some extra time on her hands, because now she's branched, with fellow artist **ALEXANDRA BOTTINELLI**, yet another volunteer enterprise.

Simply put, **Embracing Art** is about artists donating artwork to nonprofits. That is, art to hang on the walls. "It's for beautifying the workplace," Van Fleet explains. "We know that having original work in the workplace gladdens the heart and opens up dialogue."

But aren't artists always asked to give away work for charitable purposes? Doesn't we all have to silent auctions where donated artwork sold for far less than it was worth?

All true. On the other hand, few artists sell all their work, according to Van Fleet. "I realized I have a huge backlog of pieces in my studio, and it occurred to me it would be nice to donate some of this work to organizations I want

to support," she says. She sums up **Embracing Art** as giving art to "We've got art, you've got walls, let's dance."

To get the project off the ground, Van Fleet and Bottinelli selected 33 recipients — "women's [groups] that deal with violence and abuse, and 30 environmental organizations," says Van Fleet. Each will have the opportunity to select one piece of work from those of the 34 artists participating so far. After that, the organization is responsible for communicating with the artist and picking up the work.

Can the nonprofits afford the donated artwork?

Yes, Van Fleet says, with this caveat: It can't be sold at less than the retail value, and 90 percent of the proceeds must go to the artist. In addition, she cautions, "People don't realize how hard it is to sell art."

Van Fleet expects that **Embracing Art** will expand — both as contributors and beneficiaries. As for the project's name, she explains, "The artists want to embrace the work done by all these wonderful nonprofits. And we also want them to embrace having art in their lives." ☐

For more info visit [embracingart.org](http://embracingart.org)

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Dear Cecil,

The *Handbook* better be just the latest in a seemingly endless stream of pedophile standards. Is there any reliable information on the incidence of these kinds of crimes?

Stan Kaplan

**L**et's start with the bright side. There's no indication that any crimes involving children are more frequent than they used to be. What's changed is, we're hearing more now about scandals that were previously hidden up. The grim fact remains that the situation was, and is, pretty bad.

The Irish State child sex scandal got a lot of press, as did the revelations of serial child molesters in the Catholic Church and the Boy Scouts. You get the impression pedophilia is spreading like wildfire. Is it? Most guess no, probably not.

Pedophilia is defined as persistent sexual attraction to children where the perpetrator is at least age 16 and the victim is at least five years younger. As such, it's a subset of child sex crimes in general, which also include acts between kids of similar age. (I can remember to eighth-grade horror story or two) and, apparently, one-time offenses. Such distinctions may be academic or, in some cases have caused, irrelevant — it's been suggested that nearly nine in 10 child molesters either meet the criteria for pedophilia at the time of the offense or eventually will.



But let's not overstate these details. In theory, there should be two ways to get a fix on the prevalence of pedophilia. Count the offenders, or count the molerees. Unfortunately, collecting reliable numbers for either is as tricky as it sounds.

Statistics on pedophiles are *Adultery* for the obvious reason that cases typically come to light only as part of a criminal investigation or during psychological treatment. Studies of any type of sexual behavior based on self-report are notoriously unreliable, and surveys of pedophilic tendencies rarely are doubly so — that doesn't even take the land of sheep into account. What's more, even anonymously that caveat having been said, here's a sampling of the research.

- A 1989 study of about 200 male college undergrads found 5 percent admitted to sexualizing to pictures of children, and 1 percent said they'd have sex with a child if they could get away with it.
- A 1991 study found 5 percent of some 600 college men reported having had a sexual experience with a child when they were 16 years or older.
- Last year I think this is strictly a male kind, a 2007 survey of more than 160 college women found that 6 percent had at some point had sexual experiences with a child at least five years younger. Just one problem: These women were on average only 12 at the time, meaning

we're stayed pretty far from pedophilia as usually understood.

We turn to the more important question: How many children do pedophiles victimize? Here, too, it's difficult to say — the numbers reported in different studies simply don't match up, possibly in part because different types of sexual abuse are often conflated.

For example, a 2007 report on pedophiles from the Mayo Clinic cites a survey of 1990 Canadian young adults that found nearly a third of the women and a sixth of the men had experienced unwanted sexual contact before they were 17. Those are alarming numbers.

But the report goes on to say, "Most of the one-time offenses reported by females were committed by another adolescent of similar age" is that bad? Absolutely it's bad. But it's not pedophilia.

Likewise, a 2000 study says, "There have been marked declines in... childhood exposure to violence and abuse from the early 1990s to the recent past" and so proof grows a long list of indicators, one of which is a 53 percent drop in proven second abuse cases.

However, when you dig into the guts of the study, which compares the results of two telephone

surveys of violence leveling children in 2003 and 2008, you find two things first, both reports of sexual abuse by adults, as opposed to by other kids, have declined only modestly second and perhaps more significant, the incidence of such reports is small, around 9.3 percent.

Reports of other types of abuse, such as *bullying* and statutory rape, are more common, as the 1 to 3 percent range, arguably none of this qualifies as pedophilia. (Of what it's worth, they're trending down.) One percent or even a third of 1 percent is a lot when spread across the whole population. But there's little sign of a massive unrecognized problem.

Given the state of the data, we can't draw any definite conclusions, so let's just call the following observations. It seems reasonable to say pedophilia is not as dire as it's made out to be, not especially common, and not especially common in children, as the other forms of sexual and child abuse, has never been widely tolerated. Given greater awareness and more precautions, therefore, one may suppose that, however often pedophilia occurs now, it'll happen less in the future. That may be wretched thinking. But notwithstanding news reports, there's no sign it's happening more.

**E** If there's something you want to get straight, I'll be happy to help. Write Cecil Adams, 1000 North American Boulevard, Suite 100, San Francisco, CA 94103. Or email me at [cecil@straightdope.com](mailto:cecil@straightdope.com).



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# WHISKEY TANGO FOXTROT

We just had to ask...

## What's with the free house on the Barre-Montpelier Road?

BY GINGER VIEIRA



How hard can it be to give away a house? In this town, you'd think a free home would be snatched up in seconds. But when it comes with a sign that reads, "FREE HOUSE! YOU MOVE IT!" things start to get a bit complicated.

Located on Route 302 in Barre — the exact address is 781 North Main Street — the modest little green house looks only out of place sandwiched between Peckford Street and the self-service Rob-A-Dub Car Wash. According to nearby business owners, the house has sported its "FREE" sign for nearly a year.

After some snooping, we discovered that the owner of the house is Richard Bushara, who lives one house up on Peckford Street and owns the car wash.

"I'm interested in the land, not the house," explains Bushara, 48, who co-owns the Capital Plaza Road in

Montpelier with his family and runs other local businesses. "I bought the property from the bank as a fore-closure," he says, and notes that removing the house would enable him to expand his own yard.

"The house will need a lot of work," Bushara continues. "The outside is fine, but the inside is unusable, which is why we don't rent it. It's a single floor-upper. I thought, rather than tearing it down, maybe somebody or even a charity could use it, and they could take the time to fix it on their own."

According to Vermont estate websites, the commercial value of the 2,290-square-foot house is \$64,200.

"I've had many calls from people interested in stripping the house for its resources, but I don't want to do that," Bushara says.

The biggest problem with a free house

that needs to be moved is, well, moving it. The process is not cheap; this couple was interested in moving the house, Bushara says, but the estimated cost was almost \$100,000, far more than they were prepared to invest.

The price of transporting a house is based on various factors. According to Norman Messer of the family-owned Mount Hope Moving & Construction in Barre, the biggest is the distance the house would have to travel. Other variables include the house's dimensions, particularly its width compared with the width of the road, and the time of day when a move is feasible. Traffic would obviously add to the difficulty and therefore to the price. Considering that Bushara's free house sits very close to a busy main road, finding a move would be tricky.

REEL Messer is convinced that the job

could be done. "If a building is standing, it can be successfully moved," he says.

"It's an expensive project," says Bushara, "even though they're getting a free building."

If no one wants the house, he's prepared to take care of it himself. "I've looked into doing a controlled burn and tearing it down myself," Bushara says, and suggests his deadline might be the end of this month.

But he isn't giving up hope that someone will turn up who wants to make use of the building. If you're lucky with snowing, have 30 grand available and are up for the adventure of moving a house, Bushara would love to hear from you. ☺

Overgrown, or merely curious, about something? Send your burning question to [whiskeytangofoxtrot@vermontjournal.com](mailto:whiskeytangofoxtrot@vermontjournal.com).



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# Trash and Treasure

BY MARGOT HARRISON

**NAME**  
Kyle Scanlon

**TOWN**  
Essex

**JOB**  
Owner, K.C. Scanlon  
Vermont Estate Sales &  
Transition Services

**W**hen the owners of a 5,000-square-foot, four-story house decide to downsize, where does all the stuff go? That's a question Kyle Scanlon is well-qualified to answer as he guides a stately Victorian in Burlington's Hill Section for a tag sale.

Scanlon, 43, co-owns K.C. Scanlon Vermont Estate Sales & Transition Services with his wife, Anne. Together they work with homeowners as their heirs to empty out full houses, selling the possessions they can sell, donating or disposing of the rest. The Scanlons founded the business in 2007 and went full time once they hit 26 annual sales, in 2011. Last year, they held nearly 70.

About the Victorian Scanlon says, "at this sale, we'll have about 150 people lined up. We'll have people getting here at about three thirty in the morning... Think of Black Friday, but with only one sample of each item."

Among the items he expects to go fast are a Victorian beveled-glass mirror and the house's original iron bathtub. Scanlon knows how to spot the treasures. A third-generation antique dealer, he spent a decade working as an appraiser at William's Decorative Mirror & Company.

Unlike the section business, K.C. Scanlon doesn't stick to high-ticket items. "We sell Prada, we sell Gucci, Louis Vuitton," Scanlon says. "And then we sell plenty of \$1 bubblegums, too. Anything you could want, we've sold or we'll sell" — totaling 60 to 90 percent of the average home's contents.

The Scanlons' commission varies with those contents, "anywhere from 25 to 40 percent," he says. After an initial evaluation, the couple presents clients with a total sale estimate and commission rate; then get to work prepping the house and spreading the word.

Their business requires a lot of people skills, Scanlon says, from dealing with grieving relatives to building a following of buyers. The toughest competition of first-come, first-served tag sales isn't for everyone, but since people wouldn't rent them.

Seven days followed Scanlon through the house to find out how one person's extra baggage becomes another's treasure.

**SEVEN DAYS:** How do you set up a sale like this?

**KYLE SCANLON:** Our first step is what we call "decluttering." It's taking the everyday household stuff out of the house that might distract — the magazines everybody has, that kind of stuff. Usually when we come to a house, the family members have gone through and taken what they want, so we have to do some strategizing. We pull things out of drawers, we put them out on tables, we sort through silver.

**SD:** What was the largest house you handled? The smallest?

**KS:** We do a lot of million-dollar-plus houses, we do a lot of second homes, and we've done double-wide trailers, too.

**SD:** How do you decide whether to include valuable antiques in the tag sale or refer the client to a dealer?

**KS:** It's a matter of what's popular on the market right now. Who else doesn't know what the true sale [in the value of an item] is, that should go to auction.

**SD:** What's the most valuable or unusual item you've encountered?

**KS:** This summer I found \$600 in cash in a envelope in an envelope. That was a fun thing. I was by myself, and I was moving the couch to throw it out, actually.

**SD:** You prefer not to have the owners present at a sale. Why?

**KS:** Honestly, I have never seen a seller help a sale. If I have a daughter or son there crying because they're selling grandma's gloves, that's not going to help my sale at all.

**SD:** How do you handle a house that hasn't been cleaned out in decades?

**KS:** We joke that our commission rate should go up the more generations have been in the house, because there's a lot to clean out. But the ones that haven't been cleaned out in decades are the ones where you find the treasures, too.



Last year we did a sale and the family had been into the house, and they had a dumpster. My daughter and I went to look in the Dumpster, and we started pulling out handfuls of gold jewelry that they'd thrown away. They didn't know how to deal with it. That happens quite a bit.

**SD:** What do you do when you see an item you want yourself?

**KS:** We never buy stuff beforehand at our sales. We just don't feel that it's fair to set a price on something and then to buy it.

**SD:** What's your favorite part of the job?

**KS:** About six o'clock [in the morning]

of the sale), you'll start to see people walk down the driveway, and they'll be carrying deer antlers. They'll be carrying dog leashes, a chandelier. They'll be as happy with what they got. I love just taking that time watching people walk down the driveway with their purchases. ☺

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12.1-million-dollar in the Green Hollow neighborhood

# High Rollers

When money is no object, Vermont's luxury realtors step in

BY KATHYR FLAUG

If your pockets are deep enough, there are some beauties to be snapped up in the Vermont real estate market. Looking for that elusive Vermont gentleman's farm? Nearly 12 million could buy an "exceptional family recreational retreat" on more than 1000 acres in Woodstock. For \$2.9 million, you could own a cozy, 4670-square-foot lakefront residence in Colchester with three bedrooms, two libraries and "wonderful open and airy living spaces." And, if you're really going for broke, \$5.9 million could buy you a staggeringly huge, 16,058-square-foot gateway to nature that one real estate listing bullishly describes as a "harmony of past and future" and a "vacation and efficient luxury residence."

If you're dreaming of a piece of Vermont paradise, to call your own, chances are there's a house out there for you. And ready to help you find it is a small band of real estate agents who specialize in the luxury market and are adept at discussing the finer points of wine cellars, boat moorings and private tennis courts.

These agents say the luxury market is picking up.

"I think that Vermont will always enjoy that mix, and we will continue to have a cycle of people willing to bear the expense of owning and estate in Vermont," said Wade Weather, the regional manager for residential brokerage at LocalVue, a regional luxury real estate agency.

Of course, the luxury market — like all sectors of the real estate world — took a hit in the recent economic downturn. Prices dropped between 15 and 30 percent for high-end properties. In fact, according to Weather, the high-end real estate market started to shift before most Americans even knew a recession was on the way. "We actually started to see a change in 2008," he said. "Buyers began to get

nervous. They follow the stock market — and they're short on cash of the curve."

In particular, LandVue saw its second-home market — which had traditionally made up 70 percent of the company's sales — slow significantly. Buyers who might otherwise have been interested in second homes sat on the sidelines and watched, Weather said, until the financial forecast began to improve. Even now, some of those buyers — in their 40s and 50s — find themselves with fewer "recurring years" ahead of them, and a second home purchase seems less enticing.

And just as markets are always shifting, so are buyers' preferences in luxury real estate. Weather specializes in waterfront properties and estate properties here. While the waterfront homes are still extremely desirable, he said, those end-of-the-road dreamhouses are less so than in the past. Buyers today want better properties on a hill slope or the water, where they have access to "instant-grass-leave" recreation in their backyards, Weather said.

For an up-close and personal look at Vermont's high-end real estate market, I headed to one of the state's hottest playgrounds, Route 1, to meet with the Smith Macdonald Real Estate Group — mother and son, only from Peggy Smith and Mike Macdonald. Smith joked that she's the "grande dame" of real estate in State. She's been in the business since the 1970s, when "high end" meant a modest by today's standards six-chamber on Mountain Road. Macdonald grew up in Route 1, left Vermont to work in real estate in New York City for 30 years and returned two years ago to step into the family business.

Last year, according to an annual report that Smith and Macdonald compiled, 11 percent of all residential sales in Route 1 averaged \$1 million. They estimate that about 10 percent of their own business is what they call the luxury market, which they define as houses costing at least \$900,000.

Like Weather, Smith and Macdonald agreed that residential real estate sales — in both the high- and low-end markets — are booming back. Total residential sales numbered 74 houses in State last year, the same figure as in 2008 and 2007.

The recession was a reality check for some in the market, particularly homeowners looking to adjust their expensive properties. Smith and Macdonald noted that it took some sellers a few years to realize that their property commitments might not translate into the selling prices they had envisioned.

Meanwhile, in recent years prospective buyers have become savvier. "They wanted a deal — a real deal," Macdonald said, and those buyers were willing to hold out on purchasing when they suspected they weren't snapping up a luxury home at a (comparatively) low price. Both factors



Interior of the Green Hollow property



— higher than realistic price tags and bargain-basement houses — resulted in slow-down real estate movement during the worse years of the recession. The slow market reshaped the bottom in 2009, when just 47 residential properties traded hands.

Smith took the lead as we set off to explore two properties in Stone's upscale neighborhoods. Turns out, riding a sign through the town with her is almost as illuminating as peering over property transfer data at the town clerk's office. As she navigated the streets in her Subaru Outback, Smith casually pointed out various properties she'd sold and rattled off their prices: \$3 million here, \$5 million there. She's been inside so many Stone homes that, at dinner parties, Smith often finds herself showing other guests where the bedrooms is.

Our first stop was a nearly 3000-square-foot home in the Stone Hollow neighborhood, on the market for \$2.5 million. The big selling point here, as Smith says, is the floor-to-ceiling windows. To demonstrate, she pulled up the blinds on a few, exposing views out to Stone Mountain, but with the rest shut. With 56 windows in the house, it takes her a half hour to open the blinds before a showing — and just as long to close up shop afterward.

Smith tugged me into what she calls her favorite room in the house: an enormous walk-in pantry the size of my own kitchen, where we both ediled and shined over the storage space. We peered out at the decks that jutted from several of the house's six bedrooms and admired a stone gazebo with an enormous fire pit I tracked inside the yard, girdled around the house in her Stone Trough, peeling into closets and bedrooms. Because the owners still used the vacation house, it remained fully furnished, with the occasional family photo or basket displayed on a bedside table.

The owners had, however, followed Smith's advice to purge the house of most of their valuable personal paraphernalia, making it as easy as possible for prospective buyers to envision themselves there without interference from another family's private life. Even so, Smith cautions, many buyers are picky and fickle, easily turned off by a property because they don't like the current owner's choice of sofa.

That led Smith to mention a curious quirk of the luxury real estate market in her neck of the woods: Even clients who have near boundless resources and rarely could embark on dramatic renovations or redecorating sprees, she said, rarely want to take on a major project. If the tile or paint color in a home isn't just right, many people will keep looking.

Smith herself has never had that problem. An art teacher before she entered



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the real estate biz, she said she's always had a knack for imagining the design or decorating possibilities of a home. "I'm probably a frustrated architect," she chuckled, after relating one story about taking a customer to a catalog as one of her first residences to expose the beginnings of a cathedral ceiling.

Her job, as she sees it, is to help buyers imagine the possibilities of a home.

Our second stop was a \$3.8 million home on 42 acres in the Silver Hill neighborhood — with some of the best views in Stone. Smith promised here enough after we wound our way up the mile-long driveway, we were rewarded with a sweeping vista stretching down Candy's Hump to Mt. Mansfield, with Trapp Family Lodge visible in the distance.

A thick layer of snow hid the swimming pool, but Smith pointed out another recreational perk: a frozen, the walled court used to play a basketball game known as *leisure* pool. The house wasn't more than 20 years old, but a few reclaimed posts and beams accented its open floor plan. This felt like a rustic mountain getaway, just right for an upstate hunt among friends, with a proposal wine cellar to segment the festivities.

In Smith's experience, she said, few of the high-brier buyers looking for real estate in Stone gravitate toward historic properties. More modern homes, outfitted with luxury amenities, move faster on the market. Customers want at least five or six bedrooms — and as many bedrooms. They're looking for open floor plans, "drop-dead views" and high ceilings — not exactly the first of remodeling old barnhouses. Nothing too quirky is desirable, Smith said.

"Unless they find that perfect combination, they won't buy," she said.

I asked Witherell, Smith and Macdonald if catering to an upscale clientele is any different from handling your average, middle-of-the-road real estate deal. Stone clients are demanding, Witherell admitted, but they can also be incredibly generous. "We can't make a mistake," he said, "I suspect it's a lot like selling most anything, but you have to be careful all the way."

If anything, Smith and Macdonald said, some first-time homebuyers going for more modest properties need more "hand-holding." High-end clients typically have a level of financial sophistication that makes the real estate agent's job a bit easier. That said, Smith added, sales at both ends of the spectrum tend to be "no much work either way."

"We're going to get the same level of service if you're buying a \$100,000 house or a \$3 million home," she said. One difference? With the former, you can probably count out the wine cellar. ☐



# A Piece of the Rock?

Developers may dream about Burlington's perfect peninsula, but the church says no — for now

BY KEVIN J. KELLEY



**A** 166-acre peninsula jutting into Lake Champlain two miles north of the Church Street Marketplace hosts a school, a conference center, community gardens, hiking trails, a huge solar-power installation, one of the most famous golfplots features in Vermont and a magnificent set of stained-glass windows. Yet many Burlingtonians have never set foot there, some may not even know that Rock Point exists.

This grand piece of private property is open to the public but doesn't call attention to itself. Its owner, the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont, is a low-key entity associated more with devotion than ostentation. But the place represents considerable wealth — at least on paper — and is seen by some developers as prime real estate.

"It's a drop-dead location," comments Anne Patterson, president and CEO of the realty business that owns the family's name. Any buyers built there would enjoy views "in the high end of the range," he notes.

The real value of Rock Point, including its dorms or 30 buildings, is listed by the Burlington diocese's office at nearly \$70 million. The Episcopal Diocese, which doesn't pay taxes on that sum due to its religious status, would pocket quite a bonus if it were to sell some or all of its land to a developer. And, God knows, the Episcopal Church could use the cash.

The diocese's flock is thinning. "Fewer people are involved" with the church than was the case a couple of decades ago, says Lynn Bates, whose official title is canon in the ordinary, which can be translated as assistant to the bishop. "Somewhere at regular church services is not where the culture is right now," she observes. "We struggle with budgets and operating expenses."

But does that mean the Church is looking to sell? Rock Point's potential market value does give rise to temptation. Bates confesses. Officials and the faithful will know that by selling part a few of Rock Point's acres, the diocese could stop worrying about covering its roughly \$1 million annual operating budget. It could, also carry out all the deferred maintenance projects on its grounds.

Church members "south of Route 4 and in northern Vermont say this doesn't mean anything to them, so sell it!" Bates says, gesturing to the expense of lead outside a window of the diocese's nondescript office building. "There is no, in this means everything to me."



Stained-glass windows in the former Episcopal chapel.



Episcopians in the ongoing talks.



THE DIOCESE SEES THIS AS  
A SACRED PLACE.

REV. THOMAS ELY

The diocese did recently tell one of its churches — Trinity in Putney — because the local congregation had drastically diminished. The buyer was John Coffey, a Vermont sculptor who specializes in Biblical figures. An accompanying could also occur in the case of St. Ann's Episcopal Church in Richford, says Rev. Thomas Ely, the bishop of the Vermont diocese. "We're in discussions with Procter-Knight Trust of

Vermont about what will happen there," he reports.

That would leave the diocese with 47 congregations scattered around the state. And Ely estimates that about 6,000 Vermonters — or roughly 1 percent of the state's population — now identify with the Episcopal Church. "We've lost ourselves, just like every religious denomination has," the bishop says.

Despite the challenges the church is facing, however, "There is no interest in the part of the trustees in selling Rock Point," Ely declares. "It's not a part of our vision." Precisely, the diocese is "building its own," he says. "It's viable."

Besides, church officials learned several years ago that many of the most attractive pieces of Rock Point could not be developed due to septic issues and topographical factors. They had considered selling, but "decided there was no point in proceeding," Ely notes.

Another alternative to building on Rock Point, Patterson adds, is Burlington's inclusionary zoning program, which stipulates that about 20 percent of residences in a midlevel development must be "affordable."

"That changes the potential value substantially," the realtor says, "but that doesn't mean it can't be developed."

Ely's reference to one of Rock Point's hidden gems, the 100-year-old Bishop's House, a brick building designed in the Water Revival style, stands about half a mile to the west of Burlington High School, down a one-lane road and next a cove of bare trees and evergreens.

Nearly to the Bishop's House Conference Center. It was built about 30 years ago as a replacement for the Episcopal Institute, which was constructed in 1857 — three years after the Episcopians initially came to Rock Point. That grand Gothic structure, first used as a school for boys and later as a boarding facility, was destroyed by a fire in 1979.

The modern conference center rents — for \$100 to \$700 per day, depending on the number of people — to religious groups and secular institutions for staff retreats and other gatherings. Weekends are fully booked well into the future, Bates notes. That makes the center an important source of income, which the diocese would like to increase by renting the space more frequently on weekdays, she says.

A refurbished farmhouse, now the home of the property manager, is situated near a few others that are used during the diocese's summer-camp programs. Kids who attend become steeped in the church's social mission, Bates notes. The diocese is an example of the relief work performed by Episcopians around the state in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Irene. The Episcopians also have a progressive political agenda. Ely recently joined 29 other Episcopal bishops in a new action



challenging the constitutionality of a federal law prohibiting same-sex marriage.

City-administered community garden plots lie close to the entrance to the property and along a portion of Route 104 Road lined with white pines and flowering spruces. Another kind of harvesting takes place alongside them. In what used to be an open field, AllEarth Renewable has built Burlington's largest solar-power installation, consisting of 35 roughly 20-foot tall sun trackers arranged in rows. The array is expected to produce about 200,000 kilowatt-hours of power a year — enough to account for two-thirds of the electrical energy used on the donor's property.

Burlington residents familiar with Rock Point High associate it with the imposing stone and wood building a

steep cost for two-thirds of the current student body.

Curran, room and board is pegged at \$33,500. Part of that sum pays 23 staff members to provide nearly one-on-one coverage for the students, most of whom are from out of state. About 85 percent of Rock Point graduates go on to college, Sparto says.

He describes the school's finances as sound but adds that he's trying to recruit an additional eight students to increase income and to make maximum use of Rock Point's resources.

In addition to a well equipped library with a dance floor at its center, the school's attractions include a signage cabin that is a short walk from the main building, its wood-fired evaporator beds just behind



Site for future construction

short distance up a hill from the main entrance to North Beach, formerly known as Bishop Haydon Hall, it was built in 1911 as a finishing school for young ladies. It was reconstructed in 1926 as the Rock Point School, though it remained an all-girls institution.

The female orientation is reflected in the design of the stained glass windows found at the former Episcopal chapel inside the school. Beautifully crafted New York-made scenes put women in the forefront. The windows are probably original to the building, but their provenance is unknown, says Lawrence Kibbecker, a specialist in architectural stained glass who maintains a studio on Burlington's Pine Street. Kibbecker probably would have been called on to make repairs on those windows even if his wife Marilyn Grieco, hadn't taught English at Rock Point School for many years. Kibbecker says the quality of the unknown artisan's work is in "the web's personality, right up with the very best."

The school, which is still owned by the Episcopal Diocese but is not religiously affiliated with it, today educates 27 students in grades nine through 12. "They're bright and curious," says school head C.J. Sparto, but many also present behavioral challenges linked to "anxiety, depression, high-functioning autism," he adds. Boys

from pockets pegged to areas in Rock Point's neighborhood. The value will be the site of a celebration on March 16 involving Rock Point's students and community members. Burlington High School students will also be invited to the single-night party as part of Rock Point's efforts to collaborate with its neighbor, Sparto says.

The diocese's grounds offer some rich outdoor-education opportunities. For example, geologists as well as students trek out to the tip of the peninsula to view a dramatic section of the Champlain Thrust, a fault that runs 200 miles from southern Quebec to New York's Hudson Valley. Perhaps 10 yards into the lake, the aptly named Lone Rock jukes above the waterline. It was believed to be sacred to the Abenakis, who once hunted and fished nearby.

It's special still.

"The diocese sees this as a sacred place," Bishop Elzy says, referring to all the property at Rock Point. Partly for that reason, he adds, "The whole area of the land being developed as a soon as regular it's not going to happen." ☐

**B** For information about Rock Point, contact C.J. Sparto at [sparto@rockpoint.org](mailto:sparto@rockpoint.org) or visit [www.rockpoint.org](http://www.rockpoint.org).

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# Rental Health

What does \$1200 per month buy in Vermont's tight rental market?

BY KEN PICARD



**W**hen it comes to Vermont's housing situation, the news this year isn't bad — if you're buying a home. According to the Vermont Economy Newsletter's just-released annual housing affordability analysis, the share of median family income needed to finance the payments on a median-priced home fell last year to 11.7 percent — a quarter-century low.

Rent is in another story. Just this week, the National Low Income Housing Coalition and the Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition released a report on Vermont's rental market, and the picture isn't pretty.

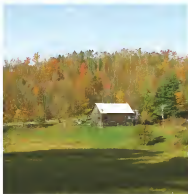
Titled "Out of Reach 2012," the report reveals that Vermont renters must earn \$18.50 per hour — or \$38,548 a year — just to afford a basic, no-frills apartment. Vermont now ranks as the 15th most expensive state in the nation for renters and the ninth most costly among nonmetropolitan areas.

The picture gets even bleaker in the greater Burlington area. According to the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, only tiny Lamoille County on Cape Cod has a rental market poorer than Chittenden County's.

But don't despair, renters! This week, *Seven Days* poked around our circulation area looking for bargains. What follows is a sampling of what renters can get for their money in the \$1000-to-\$1200-per-month price range. Obviously, those willing to stray off the beaten path — and the paved roads — can land even sweeter deals. Just be sure to factor in your additional commuting time and gas money.



## 1 Eden (Lamoille County)



Eden (population 1832) won't win any points for cosmopolitan hustle and bustle. But if peace and quiet are what you're seeking, you can find them in a converted barn with plenty of natural light, wood floors, a patio deck and exposed post-and-beam construction. The biggest selling point may be its natural setting: The 35-acre property includes a lakefront beach, apple trees, cranio dock and five acres of "striking meadows."



**FOR RENT**

Price: **\$1100/month**  
Bedrooms: Two  
Square feet: 1100  
Year built: ca. 1890  
Heat included? No  
Pets allowed? Yes



## 2 Burlington (Chittenden County)

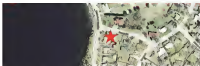


Vermont is known for having some of the oldest housing stock in the nation. But if you're seeking that new-pant smell, it would be hard to find a flatter leather than one in Thayer Commons, newly completed this year. A one-bedroom apartment in the complex starts at \$9300 — the upper edge of our price range — but boasts easy walking distance from "downtown North Avenue" (aka the Manchester supermarket plaza), Ledyard Park Arena, the Burlington Bike Path and Lake Champlain. Free gym, laundry and a "pocket park for pets" round out the deal. Sure, it was a drag leaving the New North End Department of Motor Vehicles office, but that's the price we pay for expanding Burlington's splintered-light rental market.

**FOR RENT**

Price: **\$1300/month**  
Square feet: 635  
Bedroom: One  
Year built: 2013  
Heat included? Yes  
Pets allowed? With deposit

## 3 Plattsburgh, N.Y.



Some Vermonters may look down their noses at the blue-collar burg just across Lake Champlain. But for those who want a little more for their hard-earned cash and don't mind a full-area code, this two-bedroom, one-bath ranch on Cumberland Head in Plattsburgh is right on the money — and the lake. There's a four-season room off a deck leading to a pool, two garages, a large living room and family room, a breakfast nook and spacious, updated kitchen, a master bedroom with two eight-foot closets, and internet and cable TV already installed. Throw in the large fenced yard for the horses, and this one is a real deal. Downside: Add to your daily expenses \$9-20 for the ferry to Grand Isle.

**FOR RENT**

Price: **\$1200/month**  
Square feet: Unknown  
Bedrooms: Two  
Year built: Unknown  
Heat included? No  
Pets allowed? Yes  
(except puppies) with nonrefundable deposit

## 4 Greensboro (Orleans County)



**FOR RENT**

Price: **\$1100/month**  
Square feet: Lots  
Bedrooms: Four  
Year built: Unknown  
Heat included? No  
Pets allowed? Contact for details

Looking for a rental home for you and your dogs? Check. A house near the woods? Check. How about your own trails to walk your pups and a pond to swim them in? Jazz, this four-bedroom, two-bathroom beauty near Greensboro Village appears to have it all. It comes as a "fully equipped house on a working farm," with nice views overlooking a meadow. The spacious family room features exposed wood beams and a cathedral ceiling. Rent includes a charcoal grill, fireplace and woodstove. So get burning!







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### Berlin – For Lease

The Berlin Mill has a few spaces available. Excellent opportunity to join Wal-Mart Super Center in Vermont! Current availability includes 15,000 SF junior anchor along with assorted small shop space. Past sites may also be available.



### Burlington – For Lease

Multiple suites available in the Milne Building located in the busy Pine Street corridor. Most with wood floors and exposed brick and beams. Ample free parking. On the bus-line. Spaces range from 700 – 2,000 SF.



### Colchester – For Sale or Lease

Commercial condominium. An amazing opportunity in a convenient Wal-Mart Big location! Excellent space in Harborside Professional Building. Newly laid out space with hardwood floors, skylights, partial lake views and direct parking are just some of the many great features of this condo. 1,600 +/- SF.



### So Burlington – For Sale or Lease

Stand alone medical office building in a great location! Layout consists of 4 exam rooms, 1 large office, bathroom, break room, waiting & reception area and full basement for storage. 2 car bays. Parking included. Terms discuss signage!



### So Burlington – For Lease

Water space available on Grand Street! Amenities include a dedicated entrance, lots of on site parking, excellent signage and huge daily traffic counts. Located next to Small Dog Electronics and Barnes & Noble shopping center. 2,300 +/- SF.



### So Burlington – For Lease

Multiple office suites available in the Two Oaks office complex. Suites range in size from 800 SF – 5,000 SF! Great exposure, signage and location! Minutes to 1-88 shopping, restaurants, and health club. Parking included.



### Shelburne – For Sale

Unique opportunity to own in Shelburne! Stand alone warehouse/office building available for sale. 3,300 SF on 1.4 acres. Good location. Parking included.



### Rutland – For Sale or Lease

1,400 +/- SF diner/restaurant for sale or lease. Fully equipped on 1.6 acres includes 65 +/- parking space 126 seats. Built in 1996. Great location! Daily traffic counts over 16,500.



### So Burlington – For Sale

Prime Shelburne Road real estate for sale! Property consists of 3 acres and is located at a lighted intersection. Great opportunity for investors, developers and owner occupants. Currently set up as a car dealership.



## 5 Randolph (Orange County)



In Randolph, \$1200 will land you this large, two-bedroom apartment with an open kitchen, dining- and living-room floor plan. You'll have to share laundry facilities with nearby tenants, but all utilities — heat, electricity, even cable and internet — are included in the monthly price. Also included? "Fabulous" mountain views, a bubbling brook and plenty of wildlife, berries and apples in a quiet country setting.



**FOR RENT**

Price: \$1200/month  
Square feet: 1200  
Bedrooms: Two  
Year built: Modern construction  
Heat included? Yes  
Pets allowed? No

## 6 Winooski (Chittenden County)

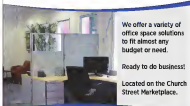


The Union City sometimes gets a bad rap for the quality of its cramped, aging rental stock relative to costs. But with some bedrooms apartment in Kent's Crossing, you can have the sprawling square footage of a Northeast Kingdom barn, this "premium luxury apartment" includes access to a fitness center and club room, optional covered parking, and central air. Located across the street from Winooski's River Walk and "just five minutes from Church Street" — by helicopter, perhaps — these apartments offer a respite from Burlington's student ghetto and other Old North End dives.

**FOR RENT**

Price: \$1265/month  
Square feet: 633  
Bedrooms: One  
Year built: 2009  
Heat included? No  
Pets allowed? Contact for details

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### 7 Troy (Orleans County)

**Watch the cat set over Joy Peak!** If you're willing to relocate to Troy, just south of the Canadian border, you could snag this renovated farmhouse on eight acres. The landlord tells us on an owner's kitchen with plenty of counter space and a walk-in pantry; if that isn't enough space for you, the property includes an additional 600-square-foot storage area. More perks include perennial gardens, a large deck and a "cozy fireplace." If cooney-casual is your thing, you can opt to reside because this is beautiful. **D**

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# Believing Is Seeing

Theater review: *Race at Northern Stage*

BY ALEX BROWN



**D**avid Mamet's *Race*, now playing in a powerful, professional production at Northern Stage, lays down a challenge: Arrive with an open mind, then learn how closed it really is.

In a law firm's conference room, a rich white man, Charles, seeks legal representation after being accused of raping a black woman. The two race attorneys — Henry, who's black, and Jack, who's white — are not eager to take the high-profile case, but they are fighting quick to demonstrate how truth is irrelevant and perception is everything. It's a lesson they also seem bent on teaching newly hired Susan, a young black woman, fresh from an Ivy League education.

And so Mamet launches his observations on race from an elegant and well-constructed framework. Using a legal setting makes judgment central. But judgment may confuse deep-seated self-deception, because race are more likely manifested

into race to affirm a belief than to reach a fair conclusion. Preoccupied with winning, these attorneys are less keen on serving a client than on brutally assessing how evidence can be manipulated. The legal system renders chance and guilt public, while a law office is like a courtroom's backstage, where arguments receive their first trial.

*Race* is not the play's only topic. These polarizing dynamics are at work here: black/white, rich/poor and male/female. Each has the power to shape beliefs.

On the male-female axis, Mamet skillfully explores how we're individually predisposed to view rape. It's a crime of violence, but also of communication and intent, and there's no forensic trace of those. Into that vacuum fly presumptions, crowding out facts. For some people (mostly women), a charge of rape must be true, because what woman would risk degradation to lie? For other people (mostly men), women want to have it both ways

— to please and coerce and then to punish. All of us are inclined toward one of these views, rape is a story we know in advance.

Mamet's fervent despair about humanity is intensified through acerbic speech as lawyers and clients construct walls of words that are more about power than justice. These are characters who never doubt themselves, each suffers from the need to be the smartest person in the room. The intellectual shenanigans of the play is intoxicating and stimulating; ideas explode like fireworks. But viewers should be prepared for a vigorous 90-minute journey, without intermission. *Race* demands intense concentration from the audience as well as the actors.

Director Maggie Mironacci-Cahill's vision is true to lay Mamet's acute sentimentalities bare, show characters burying emotions and let intellectualism hang loose. She establishes an educating pace and allows the energy of the ensemble to supply the drama. This is no without-it,



and there's no conventional, play-based tension because Mamee scriptually leaves every action ambiguous. The conflict hinges on how people describe themselves. With keen attention to Mamee's nuanced dialogue, Manacillo-Collins conducts a quartet. Each note is sounded and left ringing until we reach a final chord. What's resolved is not the question of race but the melody of Mamee's transformations on the subject.

The play premiered on Broadway in 1993, in a production that Mamee herself directed. Race is now in its first regional release, and Northern Stage's polished production delivers nuance and intensity. The actors, all members of the Equity Actors' Association, are superb at bringing the playwright's vision and dialogue into life.

As Jack, Timothy Donohue reinvents a coded energy that reveals his character's immense will to control. Quick to pique and always ready to threat, Donohue has a dancer's focus and makes every move look effortless. His elegant physical presence, matched with Mamee's soaring, restless Jack (the kind of beautiful and terrifying creature that's coming to behold), Donohue delivers Mamee's combative dialogue brilliantly.

Kevan Greg Weil gives Henry the supreme confidence of knowing exactly what he believes and where the white world will act in his name. The one up his sleeve is that he can outthink what he can't outrun. His operatic deposition on the state of race relations rolls with a flourish. "What can you say to a black man about racism?" he asks. "Nothing," chortles Charles, knowing exactly to answer. Weil plays Henry as a man using bluntness to mask fear. His shrewd character soothes but leaves one wary of the stage's benefits.

As Charles, Wyatt Henson quietly oscillates between impervious humor and rage. Mamee's visceral ambiguity about the character's guilt or innocence leaves Henson the difficult task of carrying a convincing one-upmanship, for no soul will emerge until when Charles realizes that his black college pal may have buried him all along. Henson gives a delicate shiver and nothing more. The restraint

is perfect. For Mamee, revelation has no power to transform.

Shelley Thomas plays the perfect storm by allowing every facet of the character to play equally to the audience or a license. An understated grand-manner who manages to chide, Jack, or as innocent as a child, who knocks over the chessboard? Thomas marries all of Mamee's ambiguities and never allows one overriding interpretation to emerge.

Ken Goldsack's set is a majestic display of power, in keeping with what's at stake here for lawyers and client. The opulent conference room is a sanctuary with floor-to-ceiling bookshelves, hardwood flooring and a beamed ceiling conference table. Ken Goldsack's set is a majestic display of power, in keeping with what's at stake here for lawyers and client. The opulent conference room is a sanctuary with floor-to-ceiling bookshelves, hardwood flooring and a beamed ceiling conference table.

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# Glass House

The couple behind *Desserts* by David Glass gets a fresh start in Vermont

BY ALICE LEVITT

If you lived in the New York area in the past 30 years, chances are you tasted a cake from Demers by David. Beginning in the 1980s, many a shopper discovered the rich, creamy merits of the chocolate-truffle cake on elegant black boxes sold at stores such as Zabar's, Slow Leonard's and even Trader Joe's. Whole Foods and Canadian supermarket chain Loblaw's

But how many know the secret that David Glass, who now lives in Colchester, shares about his narosuke desserts? "It's Yvonne who actually knows how to bake," the former caterer says of his wife. "I can't bake for shit!"

Daniel Glaser admits he is responsible for the celebrated chocolate cake recipe, which he learned in the 1970s while working as a nouvelle cuisine chef at Michelin-starred restaurants in France. But it's two Viennese Glaser who created most of their brand's most popular desserts, from the Ukrainian New York Cheesecake to the unconquered soggie-honey Rum-Nuttin Caramel Cake.

The Glasser moved from Incubus, Calif., into their Colchester farmhouse last November. In Vermont, David Glass has been winning new fans with his Drunken Love Bros., a trio of truffles infused with alcohol (that he markets locally through the Desserts by Wine and David Glass Facebook page). He and Vivie have both been working on books, too, the pair just published her first e-book, *Wine and David Glass' Delicious Desserts: A Knepe Book Filled With Recipes, Love and Laughs*.

But one thing the couple will not be producing in Vermont is their famous cake. That chapter of their lives ended last July, four months to the day before they left for the Green Mountains, when their 21-year-old son, Adam, died suddenly of popliteal phlebotomosis, a tumor in the heart.



In her book, Vonn Glass explains, "David and I could no longer continue our business. Every dessert was tied into memories of Adam, and every cake I made in the evening weeks was seasoned with tears."

A talented cook from a young age, Adams worked on the family's cold production line at their Connecticut factory whenever he could take the time away from high school or college. Vitis says that some of her fondest memories of her son are of working 14-hour days together around the cheese in events

Adam always encouraged his mother to write a cookbook, Wyie recalls. She began testing recipes on July 6, the day after his passing.

The unusually evocative book, composed of cake recipes and the family stories that inspired them, is both a tribute to Adams's idea that the cakes belonged to the customers who loved them, and a stirring eulogy for the young man himself. "I wanted people to remember values for the really amazing something people do best," Vinton says. "He was hard to confine to pages. If you saw him, you would find life like he personified was so physically powerful, how could he even confine himself to his body?" He mastered somehow.

Adam also figures in the sequel *When Not at Her Day Job*, assuming dashboards, salads at Champion Community Services, Wine is working on a new recipe book, focused on the stories of the mostly Latin American workers who helped make the Desserts by David Glass bakery a family. The final book in Viver's planned trilogy will feature stories about customers who were touched by their cakes: the women and the sweetest person through her cancer battle, Wine recalls, another recorded at the Glass

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## THE ULTIMATE CHOCOLATE TRUFFLE CAKE

Makes one 12-in. cake

- 2 1/2 cups unsweetened chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup unsweetened flaked coconut, plus small pieces
- 4 cups unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
- 2 extra large eggs
- 4 cups sugar
- 2 tablespoons instant coffee powder

Grease a 12-in. fluted cake pan with butter, pan with nonstick spray. Make sure to oil every spot.

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Carefully place a 1/2-lb 15-inch cake pan in the oven. Fill with hot water so the pan is about halfway full. Place the egg in the water heat while you prepare batter.

Over a double boiler or medium low heat, melt the chocolate. Stir once unsweetened flaked coconut and butter together, stirring with a whisk until the mixture is completely smooth.

Meanwhile, put the whole eggs in an on-stand up mixer. Mix the eggs and sugar on medium speed until well incorporated. Pour out water in the 15-in. 6-in. high speed or low speed on the mixer will end have the proper texture. Add milk enough to that when you rub a bit of the eggs and sugar between your fingers, the sugar feels dissolved.

Now pour the melted chocolate and butter into the eggs and sugar. Beat on medium until it is fully incorporated.

Last, add the instant coffee powder on high speed. When it disappears, turn to high speed briefly to make sure it is thoroughly mixed in.

Pour the batter into the prepared 12-in. pan. Carefully place the pan into the 15-in. 6-in. cake pan that is in the water. Bake for 1 hour. Once the cake is baked, let it cool in the water. Once it is cooled, remove the cake from the water. Once it is cooled, remove the cake from the water. Once it is cooled, remove the cake from the water.

Bake for 55 minutes to one hour. The top of the cake should have formed a paper-thin crust, and will have a cracked display in the center.

Remove from oven and let cool. Meanwhile, place a 12-in. chocolate pod over the cake and, grasping the sides, flip the cake over. Tap the edges of the pan sharply and the cake should come out. If it doesn't, use a knife to lift it. (I usually make 2000 of these a day!)

Let cool completely. You can keep the cake and freeze it, but it is delicious when the cake is day in room temperature, as I do it and I also served when I was taking the recipe for this cookbook.

Write to David Glass at 1  
David@DavidGlass.com or in his  
book: The Ultimate Chocolate

Recipe from David and David Glass  
Book: The Ultimate Chocolate  
Book: The Ultimate Chocolate  
Book: The Ultimate Chocolate

## Glass House

white-chocolate cream was the last thing her father was able to eat.

While Vince considers their famous business — which went bankrupt in 2009 — David makes his Devonian Love Wines. In his own way, he says, the process has helped him heal. "They're very therapeutic, especially when the batter tastes out just perfect and you have the perfect truffle."

Like David's cake, these near-liquid truffles are based on a beloved French delicacy. Bite into the thin jacket of dark chocolate, and they burst with an alcoholic haze of Caladous or raisin, infused rum. Every other week, David

scribbles subscriptions to his email list of his latest flavors. Truffle Flings have ranged from mood drinks such as White Russians and silky Margaritas to straight-up gin or Miller's Mark.

Vince wants that her husband include some virgin options, like perfumes to enjoy her Love Raisin plan, perhaps with a bit of booze on the side. David Glass has flavored his Love Wines with peanut butter and smoke from North Country Smokehouse. A new convert to the beach on sandwiches at 99 Asien Market in Burlington, he says he hopes soon to experiment with a truffle flavored with densen, the notoriously food Asien fruit. "I'll eat smelt it in the house past Vince," he jokes.

Cardinal Wine Glass





# SIDEdishes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 43

emphatist was Vermont cookbook author **MOLLY STEVENS**.

A visit to Zape's home in San Francisco catalyzed the idea of a memorial event in the Green Mountains. "I have seen a lot of cheese makers here, and I hope to see Vermont's best," Stevens remembers thinking. "We had a number of friends and mentors here. We should do something here and raise some money for the [Daphne Zape Teaching Award]."

Though Stevens says her original idea was "to sit around someone's living room and just do the hat," the event soon grew. **BARKEATERS: THE CLUB OF CHEESE, FISH AND FLAVOR** will take place on Sunday, March 24, from 4 to 6:30 p.m. at Mount Street Landing Performing Arts Center in Burlington.

Advance tickets are required for the event, which will kick off with an address from cheese "rock star" Art

Wentworth, cofounder and CEO of Zape's former Community of Businesses in Ann Arbor, Mich. After his talk, guests will partake of tastings that pair local cheeses with fare from Vermont restaurants and producers. For example, chef **DAVID DAVENPORT** will prepare a dish using cheese from **CAVATINI** in **VERMONT**, which also **WILL MAKE** Zape's own product. Exact ticket costs, will be available for tasting, too.

If cheese lovers are so inspired, they are welcome to praise the rinds with a sunset or lookie to be displayed on the "cheese poetry wall," Stevens says. An apt dig for Zape.

— B.A.

**2** FOLLOW US ON TWITTER for the latest food group: **Carbs + cheddar**. **Get together: Also Level 4** @cheesearts

With a bright difference of more than a foot between them, many circumsized Vince and very plump David don't look like a natural set. But throughout their interview at Dobri Tea, the two hold hands and lovingly gaze into each other's eyes. Vince says that when their children were small, they called each other on the phone every 15 minutes while she tested recipes at home. The calls aren't much less frequent now.

Though the Glasses' marriage has always thrived, this is a dual set for their desert business. In 2008, the economic downturn forced the couple to file for bankruptcy and close their Commercial Bakery after 26 years. That story will be told in David Glass' upcoming e-book, *The Rise and Fall of Desserts by David Glass, or How Not to Run a Small Business*.

Lately, the Glasses started a small, weekend-only business in an office park where they shared equipment with another baker. That ended a few weeks after Adam's death, when the couple resolved to move to Vermont to be closer to the elder of their two remaining sons, Burlington musician Joshua Glass, and his daughter, Zoe. It was something of a homecoming for David, whose paternal grandparents once owned a dress shop in St. Albans.

Another fortuitous aspect of the move is that it forces them to work

from their home kitchen. When the Glasses met in 1981, they made cakes for commercial sale illegally as the bottom floor of their row-down, historic home in Hartford, Conn. In Vermont, David can make his lattice legally. The couple will marvel that Vermont bakers are spared the overhead cost of hearty fees for production space. "To do this out of our home is really a blessing," Vince says. "Vermont is doing a really smart thing to stimulate the economy."

The ease of working at home has called her back into the kitchen, too. The Glasses hope to earn a spot at this summer's Burlington Farmers Market, where David plans to sell his Drunken Love tarts and maple caramel, made from grade C syrup provided by neighbor Peter Ferra Sugar Works.

Vince is holding in her promise that she'll no longer make her famous cakes. She'll focus instead on her cookies, including lemon bars with lemon curd and almond bars with raspberries and marzipan, using local ingredients when possible. The couple has been especially impressed with cream from **Stratford Organic Creamery**.

And, though nothing will ever replace their youngest child, the Glasses will soon begin to nurture new life—in the garden of their 10-acre property. Surely Adam would be proud. ☺



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Live Music

# Nine (Edible) Lives



Burlington's 156 St. Paul Street shows how a restaurant location can get a bad rep — and lose it

BY CORIN HIRSCH



Photo of St. Paul Street, circa 1940s. The white building is 156.

**T**he term of-the-century bricklayer who erected Burlington's 156 St. Paul Street probably didn't foresee the draw of post-war Italian or Neapolitan pizza. Yet, since it went up in 1899, the two-story brick structure that now houses Pizzeria Verde has had more than the proverbial nine lives. After its days as a laundry here, most of its incarnations have been restaurants, watering holes or both.

Locals of a certain age probably recall the smorgasbord and meat-and-vegetable banquets at 156 St. Paul from the 1970s through the '90s, such as the Drenched Cat and the Marmoset House. Others remember waiting for a table after the 2001 reconstruction at the Waiting Room, one of Burlington's earliest upscale eateries.

Yet, while Stratton's Delta has flourished since 1993, not much seemed to stick at 156 St. Paul Street after the Waiting Room closed. Open Grill, Plus K, Mishawaka Mexican Cantina and the latter came and went. Watching a string of restaurants open and close in quick

succession at a single location, it's hard not to ascribe mystical qualities to the space — Italy karma that only the right tenant can overcome that could more mundane factors be in play? And, if so, how the latest occupant, Pizzeria Verde, conquered them?

Steve Donahue, who has owned the building since 2001, thinks so. "People have been concerned about the signs that was being attached to the location," Donahue says. "But, in the [restaurant] industry, there are so many people that have concepts and don't know how to execute them well. People just fall down, you put a lot of folks who think it's simple, think it's easy, and that once they open their doors, people will come."

Donahue believes Pizzeria Verde may have finally ended that string of bad luck. "It's a pretty fickle industry," he says. "The Verde folks really had a concept that was well thought out."



More food after the classifieds section. PAGE 41

SEVEN DAYS





Prior to Yellow Sign Commercial, a real estate agent who counts restaurant leases among his specialties, also believes that location is not always the primary culprit in an eatery's demise. "Rather than being defensive, I think what's flawed is the perception that the restaurant business is glamorous or highly profitable," he says.

Yet regularly fields queries from aspiring restaurateurs who seem to have only a faint inkling of what it takes to succeed. "It just seems like it's everyone's dream to open or own a restaurant someday, and it's so easy to make money there. It's rather difficult," he says. "Most people are undercapitalized and don't have the work ethic to do it. And, unless you're really lucky, you should plan on not making any money the first year or two."

A few years later came the Irish-favored Markey Room. A magnet from the 1930s shows a fathers-looking building with weathered white aluminum siding and a shorn roof on the front. "I was there when it was 70 with an NYC address next to it," says the location, who prefers to remain anonymous. He wasn't alone, other locals, now in their thirties, admit to doing their earliest underage drinking at the now-defunct pub.

The bonds, smoke and catering apparently took their toll on the building's condition. In 1999, its market value was \$100,000, just marginally more than its purchase price 18 years earlier.

In 2003, Steve Donahue bought the place for \$250,000 and began renting it out for \$33.33 per square foot. When she founded the Writing Room in 2007, owner Anna Rosenblatt undertook an extensive

and he began the location in one possible case. "You have a difficult time getting people off Church Street in the summer," Bering notes. "You can pull people to City Hall Park, but getting them that one extra block is tough."

After the Writing Room, the long-term-tenancy tenant was 150 Euros, a sports bar with contemporary American food that opened in 2004 and lasted two years.

It was Tom Debo, who co-owns Trattoria Debo with his wife, Lisa, who tipped off real estate agent Lisa Rao that the space was up for lease again. Rao was looking for a spot to open a Minneapolis-style pizzeria. He and his partners — experienced restaurateurs Leslie Weis and David Abbou — leased 150 St. Paul in early 2012 and launched yet another restaurant. They made space for a two-story Italian-buffet pizza oven and built through the north wall to excavate head-to-toe windows.

"We loved the space but wanted to open it up and make it brighten," Wells says. "It immediately changed the room."

Did the renovation give Bering the edge it needed? Anyone who has ventured in since Verita's opening knows it has been next to impossible to "leg, steal or borrow" a seat during peak times, as Bering puts it.

Wells, who recalls the Writing Room finally taking the good vibes over down-brooding "It's always been a great spot," she says, warning against overestimating. Even though 150 St. Paul is "all the better well," Wells points out, that owners don't have to pay the higher fees associated with the Church Street Minneapolis. She adds that, rather than location, it's business acumen that matters — and a touch of good fortune.

"No matter who you are and how much you put into it, it's a little bit of the luck of the draw," Wells says. Bering and Rao did a lot of research before opening their business, and spent years perfecting the pizza. Abbou counts as a fortunate few people that is a draw, in itself. "We're fortunate every day that it's working out," Wells says.

The odds come with the odds that No 150 has ever had but knows "I don't understand the negative comments. I always feel like people said it was just that," Wells says. "They came on, did what they did, and for whatever reasons their businesses didn't work."

Certainly the St. Paul Street is not the only Burlington address that has seen its share of culinary turnover. The bar, southwest corner of Pearl Street and Wisconsin Avenue hosted an array of restaurants before Anna Monahan relayed long-term success. That business has since expanded to Minneapolis.

"If the concept is good, service is good, getting it good," says Weis, "the people will come."

And, with Verita offering a holy trinity of careful planning, collective experience and crisp, delicious pizza, they're still coming in dozens. ☐



PHOTO BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS

## PEOPLE HAVE BEEN CONCERNED ABOUT THE STIGMA THAT WAS BEING ATTACHED TO THE LOCATION.

STEVE DONAHUE  
DONAHUE & ASSOCIATES

When it comes to the difficulty of reforging restaurant debt, 150 St. Paul Street is one of Burlington's most dug — is a fascinating case study. No. 150 was created when the corner of Main and St. Paul was still dominated by the American Hotel. In 1936, a large fire ripped through the hotel. Six years later, in 1941, the apartment Hotel Vermont took its place. The building at 150, divided by its right-angled neighbor, was its lucky home. "The renegades used to go into the back and would come out the front and pick up hotel guests at Trivett's Deli. There's a ramp built under the floor out front," Donahue says.

For a few decades the building housed an auto upholstery maker. In the 1970s, No. 150 became home to a string of watering holes. Around 1975, it was the Blue Tooth, "which had 30-cent drafts," Steve Donahue recalls. Jack Kelly, then bar was followed by the Silver Key and, in the late '80s, by the Drenched Cat, where future members of the band Flash played backup to jazz musicians during weekly gigs at the Johnny & Fribourg Jazz Ensemble.

renovation, and another era in the life of 150 St. Paul was a fine dining restaurant.

Chef Mark Bering recalls wandering into the Writing Room after it opened that year. He was hired as a chef and head chef. "We were kind of doing a higher-end, ritz thing," he recalls. The kitchen served up plates such as seared yellowfin tuna with a pork-popovers crust and herb-mashed potatoes with fennel beans. "We were trying to keep it refined but not arrogant," Bering adds. Also on the line for a time was Anna Rosenblatt, now one of the principals of Minneapolis's Ministry Love & Co.

In a 2002 feature on Burlington, Gary Lee of the Washington Post called the Writing Room "Burlington's answer to New Age hipsters" with an "obscene menu." The negative caused over the restaurant's "perfectly speed-dial could spring rolls."

Despite its popularity, the Writing Room closed in 2004. Bering had already moved on, but the news didn't surprise him, he says now. He sensed the place wasn't profitable near the end of its run,

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# Meditations on Masculinity

**W**hen asked to describe his unorthodox fighting style, boxer Mohammed Ali famously replied, "I float like a butterfly and sting like a bee." The former world heavyweight champion's penchant for poetry and social activism inspired choreographer Christal Brown's *Opulence of Integrity*. Set to an original score by Farris Mahanga, elements of hip-hop, boogie and martial arts punctuate a suite of dances performed by her New York City-based company, INSPIRIT. Brown muses that portraying Ali's "tumult of a life infused by divinity, yet misinterpreted by humanity" mirrors the struggle for identity faced by men of color today.

## OPULENCE OF INTEGRITY

Fri. & Sat., March 6 and Sunday, March 16, 8-10 p.m., at Grace Theatre, Mahoney Center for the Arts, Middlebury College. (\$1-\$3; info, 443-1938; [middlebury.edu](http://middlebury.edu))



MAR. 15 & 16 | DANCE

MAR. 13-17 & 19-20 | THEATER



## Cross Examination

Pulitzer Prize-winning author and playwright David Mamet likes to push the envelope. An affinity for wordplay and razor-sharp dialogue drives his work, including the play *Race*, which explores misadventures of sex, guilt and cultural taboo behind the curtain of political correctness. Maggie Macdonald-Cahill directs a Northern Stage and Capital Repertory Theatre coproduction of this provocative tale about a team of racially diverse attorneys, who, upon opening to defend a white man accused of a crime against an African American woman, must confront their emotionally charged reactions to the case — and each other. Production contains sexually explicit language and adult themes. (See review on page 40.)

## RACE

Wednesday March 13, 7:30 p.m., Thursday March 14, 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m., Friday March 15, and Saturday March 16, 7:30 p.m., Sunday March 17, 4 p.m., Tuesday March 18, and Wednesday March 20, 7:30 p.m. See website for future dates at Briggs Opera House in White River Junction. (\$2-\$4; info, 206-730-1000; [northernstage.org](http://northernstage.org))



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## calendar

WED 12-12-12

**WISH WOMAN WEEDSAPERS.** Break out the sprayer and weed burner, and get weeding for women's center on Friday, June 1st and 2nd. Meet at 10:30 am. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm.

### Arts

**ALPINE NATURALISTS TREE PROGRAM.** Outdoor arborists will show how to change a tree's shape and use pruning to improve its health. Meet at 10:30 am. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm.

**STARTING PLAYERS.** Check out the new play, "Starting Players," at the Vermont State Theatre. Meet at 10:30 am. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm.

**EMERSON PLAYERS.** Children's theater group will perform "Emerson's Play" at the Vermont State Theatre. Meet at 10:30 am. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm.

**FAIRPLAY PLAYBOYS.** Young men's theater group will perform "Fairplay" at the Vermont State Theatre. Meet at 10:30 am. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm.

**WINTER STORY HOUR.** Children's theater group will perform "Winter Story" at the Vermont State Theatre. Meet at 10:30 am. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm.

**WINTER MUSIC & MOVIES.** Children's theater group will perform "Winter Music & Movies" at the Vermont State Theatre. Meet at 10:30 am. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm.

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**STUDENT MATINEE SERIES: THE LADY OF THE LAMPS.** The Vermont State Theatre will perform "The Lady of the Lamps" at the Vermont State Theatre. Meet at 10:30 am. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. 10:30 am - 12:00 pm.

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# Standard Deviation

The curious case of Blanche Blanche Blanche

BY DAN ROLLES

"It seems to me that we have a marketing problem," says Zach Phillips. "We're very hard to identify with."

Phillips, speaking by phone from his home in Brooklyn, N.Y., is a founding member and keyboardist of the experimental pop band Blanche Blanche Blanche. I've just asked him, rather reluctantly, how he would describe his band's music. Usually, that question is music-scribe *sacrosanct*—a music writer who can't describe music in the wrong line of work. But in the case of Blanche Blanche Blanche, it's not alone in my purview. As reviewers from online publications such as *Intervista*, *BrooklynVegan*, *Pitchfork* and others have discovered, the band can often leave even capable writers at a loss for words or at least in a frantic search to find the right ones.

That search will begin anew this week when the band releases its latest LP, *Wooden Ball*, on Brooklyn-based cassette label RMA. Tapes On 45 levels ones a string of release shows, including one on Friday, March 11, at the RCA Center in Manhattan with indie Ryan Power, Ben of Belton and Ty Brest. Much like RMA's extensive releases, the record features a heavy collection of deconstructed pop, music songs that twist, turn and twist again until a disorienting maelstrom of alien synth and fractured vocals. "This is music that aggressively grows at the boundaries of modern musical convention. Even the band's members, Blanche Blanche Blanche, suggest a sort of panicked immersion. In short, it's bewildering stuff."

So how does Phillips describe RMA music?

"Non-altruistic, aspergery, which means actively avoiding us when we're off-camera. And the accidental alone I think we've been hitting on is what I like to call 'open-session rock.' ... We do the work now, and you figure out what it means to you later on."

Phillips explains that a central tenet of RMA's artistic philosophy is not to *impose* any deeper meaning to their work during its creation. Instead, he and cofounder Zach Smith prefer to let



WE MIGHT THINK SOMETHING IS BEAUTIFUL,  
AND THEN KIND OF WANT TO FUCK WITH THAT.

ZACH PHILLIPS

their music exist as a free-floating and free-wheeling extension of themselves, which is to say, unpredictable.

"We're both pretty music people," says Smith, speaking by phone from his home in New York City. "And I think that comes out in our music."

"The way that we work, we really don't try to encapsulate the significance of what we're trying to do up front," says Phillips. "It's more about placing our trust in the act of working."

The idea that there is no conscious idea has left audiences and critics alike scratching their heads in an attempt to interpret some greater message or meaning in RMA's music. It has also inspired some interesting, and sometimes dubious, speculation, from off-the-rack comparisons to other artists — Ariel Pink, for one — to White Stripes-like musings on the nature of the duo's relationship.

Over the crowd, Phillips and Smith are childhood friends who grew up in outposts in Hanover, N.H. "We were big friends," says Smith. And yes, they did date for several years but are no longer a couple.

For her part, Smith says that at least some of the material on *Wooden Ball* is a reaction to the national situation the band received last year for its 2002 re-

cord, *Wink With Both Eyes*. On "Fidelity of Use," for example, arrested blazes of synth cover up a phobias bass line, finding off a blunder of drums that seem to crash in a heap just as the break of gaming rhythmic momentum. Between the frustrated movement of a malfunctioning Roomba vacuum and you'll get the idea.

Over this collapsing cacophony, Smith steps in aspheric despatches, "Mia's even worse when it's not great."

There is a way sense of humor in RMA's writing, coupled with a keen self-awareness of the band's own strangeness. While Smith describes their collaborative lyric-writing style as something resembling streams of consciousness, both say their approach to musical composition is anything but off the cuff.

Phillips says that RMA's songs typically begin life as far more conventional tunes might hammer out on piano.

"It's a song that seems to have conspicuous chordal content, it was written on a piano," he says. From there, he describes a process of meticulous deconstruction.

"We might think something is beautiful, and then kind of want to fuck with that," he continues.

One of the signature ways in which RMA do just that is to use bass guitar in

an almost adversarial relationship to Miller's vocals, resulting in a queer sort of counterpoint.

"That's a fundamental idea that structures the songs, the tension of the bass against vocal melodies, explains Phillips. "The melody is doing something pretty, so we'll dissonance it with the bass."

As outlandish as their material often sounds, RMA are virtually no conscious effects. There are no computer sequences, effects, tape loops or any other hallmarks typical of modern experimental pop.

"It's one synthesizer and occasionally a piano," says Phillips, who plays a Yamaha XY32 of RMA's core sonic aesthetic.

"A lot of the music that we both find compelling seems to have at its core a love of knowledge and activity," says Phillips. "But there is also a sense of refusing to slight for very long an something and seeing it any significance."

That sense of intellectual and emotional ADD is readily apparent on *Wooden Ball*. Barely does the band linger on any theme, musically or lyrically for more than a few seconds. And you would be hard-pressed to divine anything resembling a traditional hook or chorus in most of the 10 songs that make up the under-10-minute record. Just as quickly as Blanche Blanche Blanche touch on an idea, they move on to the next one. That's true on a macro level as well.

The band has already finished recording a follow-up to *Wooden Ball*, due out on Brooklyn's Wharf Cat Records later this year. Featuring the band's current six-member lineup, the album will be the band's seventh in roughly 10 months.

"We're both pretty crazy," says Smith of their predilection. "We have a tendency to make something and then immediately mean an, endlessly trying to avoid cycles so we can move on to the next idea." And then the next one. And the next... ②

**B**lanche Blanche Blanche: Ryan Power (vocals) and Zach Smith (keyboards) at the RCA Center in Manhattan on Friday, March 11. N.Y. 11, Wooden Ball is available at RMA.com. (L)



# SOUNDbites

BY DAN BULLS

## Almost Famous

Savvy by Soundbites is a monster. Part industry mixer, part festival, part precursor to *Alcoholics Anonymous* meetings, it is one of the most important music events of the year, and tangibly the largest. But it wasn't always.

Once upon a time, *SCSW* was simply a showcase for Austin bands, a way for the city's musicians to snag a slice of the publicity pie from their higher-profile New York or Los Angeles brethren. As the festival has exploded in popularity and cultural importance, it has spawned an inevitable backlash that's manifested in a variety of forms.

To certain, savvy owners of the blogosphere, it is fashionable to berate *SCSW* as overblown and overpriced corporate posturing — a not entirely baseless claim. Ask Austin residents — the ones who don't pack up and leave town during the music week — how they feel about the fest, and you'll hear a spectrum of answers ranging from the politically correct ("It's a loss for the city") to the blantly honest ("Get the hell out of my bar. And don't mess here").

Perhaps the most infamous — and pointed — response to *SCSW* was the rise of a underground antifestival called *Puck X Puck*. You. Clever monkey, no?

At first glance, you'd think such an event was started by some jilted Austin band feeling its wounds after being shut out of *SCSW*. And you'd be mostly right, save for one small detail: *XPXU* wasn't started by Austinites. It was started by a Vermont local, **IAN TAYLOR**, and proud of it. True story.

The year was 1999. Taylor's band, which also included drummer **TRAVIS FURBER** (see *SCVNEWS*) and a teenage **JOSH LOOPER** (made in Ohio), had submitted a demo tape to *SCSW* and spent the months leading up to the festival trying to raise enough money to travel to Austin, despite not having heard back from festival organizers about whether they'd been accepted. One thing that hasn't changed over the years: Getting into showcases at *SCSW* is incredibly competitive.

Taylor, who now lives in Montpelier, writes that about 10 days prior to the festival she was informed that the band had not been offered a gig, but having gone all in on the bet that they'd be playing, they decided to go anyway. "Our bandmates had all requested more off-



Prep Taylor

from work. And there was that peppy starter of all the money that had been raised to send the band on its way. This was pre-Kickstarter, after all, and there was no way to repay those who donated.

"We couldn't just keep the money we'd raised and stay home," writes Taylor.

So she booked two small club shows as consolation. First in Waco, Texas — two weeks after the *Blind* Davidson shootings —. *Puck's* was, like *Blind*, lost a time. The sold scraped the pavement and the ensuing sparks set the van on fire.

"Trey, being the amazing crucifixion drummer in the band, jumped out of the van before I could even scream," writes Taylor. *Puck* then dumped the band's beer cooler, filled it with water from a roadside ditch and extinguished the flames. Incredibly, no one was injured. And Taylor and company made it to Austin. But they were stranded until they could afford to fix the van.

In Austin, the band crashed with a Vermont artist, musician and artist **STANIS KARANAS**. Near Austin's place was the *HiLo* House, a large co-op — and notorious party house — occupied by college students. Among its previous residents: a singer named **JANE**.

**JANE**: Taylor approached the house's inhabitants and related her story. She asked the residents if they would like a fundraising show to get the band back on the road. They happily agreed.

"And *Puck X Puck* was born!" writes Taylor.

Taylor went to the local *Blind's* and had hundreds of flyers and posters made bearing the *XPXU* moniker. She plastered downtown Austin and stood outside *SCSW* showcases handing out handbills.

"People totally got what we were doing," she says in a recent phone conversation. "They were psyched to get away from *SCSW* politics."

The party was a smash success. Taylor says hundreds of people rolled through the door, including members of Austin bands like *MAIA*, the *OUTSIDE COMEAS* and the *FRANKS*. The band raised enough money to fix the van, and was subsequently invited to play some "crappy little bar and basement shows."

As for *XPXU*? Hard to say. *Austin* from a few random YouTube videos and message-board posts bearing the band's, the festival has almost no internet presence — a surprising, given its counter-cultural nature. Though it's clear some version of it existed at least as recently as 2008. Responding to an email inquiry, **MARIA HERNANDEZ**, the current music editor at the *Austin Chronicle*, says that while the festival has some name cachet in Austin, he hasn't heard anything about it recently.

But it'd be like to think that somewhere, most likely in East Austin, some straggly-eyed, down-on-their-luck band who came to *SCSW* this week only to have their chances dashed will play an impromptu set for the *disability* festival.

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# REVIEW *this*

## Anais Mitchell and Jefferson Hamer, *Child Ballads*

(MELANIDE & DIGITALMELANIDE)

On their debut collaboration, *Child Ballads*, Vermonters Anais Mitchell and NYC-based songwriter Jefferson Hamer trace the four-volume treasure trove of old world folk music that in *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, an anthology compiled by 19th-century collector Sir Francis James Child. With its many tales of folk-tale romances, love and death — and witchcraft — drawn from centuries-old folk songs, Mitchell and Hamer's lovingly produced collaboration is simply put, timeless.

Interestingly, the two chose not to strictly adhere to the liturgical or melodic notations of their source material. For starters, because they were most often drawn acoustically, there are no standard variations of chords or those seven songs, making it next to



impossible to agree on a definitive version. Handwritten materials have been taking liberties with these songs for centuries, so why not Mitchell and Hamer?

Additionally, while old English provides beautifully poetic phrases, in certain instances the original language proved too confusing for modern audiences — make your best if you know what "he's faked low at the pie" means. It is in the interest of listening to each song's story, Mitchell and Hamer made slight adjustments to the original texts — and, when it served the narrative, to melodies. Coupled with well-considered choices for instrumentation and arrangements that err on the side of openness, the result is a record that honors old-world storytelling tradition without losing sight in the heady fire of history.

In spite of these modern modern updates, the album's sense of time and place is absorbing. The richness of

language imports nothing as it leaves gravity, as Mitchell's sprightly voice filters through Hamer's effortless tone on brooding tales of star-crossed lovers, broken promises, foolish kings and ill-fated sea voyages. Decked by subtly placed acoustic guitar and accented by well-placed swirls of pump organ and fiddle, these two hit the with striking vitality.

You'll find yourself laughing on every word to the duo sing of a noble maiden bearing a peasant's child out of wedlock ("Willie o' Winsbury"), a wife pleading for the life of her wrongly accused husband ("Goodman"), and a scorned mother's cruel curse ("Child Wren"). As Mitchell and Hamer discovered in these ancient songs, they are finely wrought storytelling. And as *Child Ballads*, Mitchell and Hamer vividly bring those stories to life once more.

*Child Ballads* by Anais Mitchell and Jefferson Hamer is available beginning Tuesday, March 16, at [anaismitchell.com](http://anaismitchell.com).

DAN ROLLIS

## Violette Ultraviolet, *Love Wait What Yes*

(SELF-RELEASED CD)

When last we left Jake Brennan he was leaving the local six-country coffee shop's shiverer, had after leaving out of the gate with a series of well received shows last year, that band has gone quiet, presumably to regroup following a significant lineup change last season. In the meantime, Brennan has recorded a side project under the name Violette Ultraviolet alongside multi-instrumentalist Rob Valued. The duo's debut EP, *Love Wait What Yes*, is no descent riff filled with songs of lost love and longing. While not as raucous as Brennan's ensembles, it is still an impressive effort, deserving of a place in the record stacks of local six-country fans — not to mention the recently backbroken.

The EP opens on "Lovers." Over reverb-laden hollow-bodied guitar chords, Brennan howls barely intelligible, love-toned lines. (How, his anguished yelp is less the "young Ryan Adams" that Brennan fans have come to know and love, and closer to the wailing of Cold War-era Neil Young.



While in either case, his evocative mood imports more than enough wounded pathos to get the point across — with or without the benefit of reading the lyric sheet.

On the following cut, "Lassoed Coats," Brennan borrows the progression from Leonard Cohen's classic "Hallelujah." Through the fourth, the fifth, the penultimate and the major lift, he spins a bleak-eyed tale of love going bad. Like Cohen's tale, it is a spiritual overture implicit in Brennan's adaptation. But where Cohen's religiosity was allegorical, Brennan's is seemingly more literal. "We could have God and take up holidays / I want you, plan God, isn't mine anyone," he sings. It's a possible homage to Cohen. But more importantly, it is a devastatingly effective heartbreaker.

The record drifts on the next

track, "Chances," sonically at least. Emboldened by a propulsive backdrop and shimmering array of floating nasal squeals, Brennan takes a more forceful approach. It's almost like he's working through the post-breakup stages of grief and has entered the anger and/or bargaining phases.

"Confession" is an appropriately dejected song that develops from a dispassionately ethereal place into a surging wall of guitars and open vocals. It maintains a ghostly intensity throughout, but as it builds to emotional saturation it takes on a sinister feel.

*Love Wait What Yes* closes on the moodiest acoustic number "Maybe." Based around little more than acoustic guitar, vocal harmonies and the occasional twinkle of piano, it is the EP's strongest, but sparsely. The song features Brennan's most direct songwriting and his most understated vocal performance. While the song's experimentalism based on the preceding numbers is certainly engaging, it is interesting that the album's best track is also its simplest.

Violette Ultraviolet debut at Radio House this Saturday, March 16.

DAN ROLLIS

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11/17/14



## BURGLAR #170

Power) 10 p.m. Free

**BLU MUSH PUB** Dance and party  
to 10 p.m. Free. Live performance  
to 11 p.m. Free. The X King  
(rock) 4 p.m. The Goodie Justice  
(rock) 10 p.m. Free

## central

**BAITERS** Jazz brunch with  
Jazz Holiday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
**CHARLES 1** The Cap Dots  
(soul/punk) 8 p.m. Free

## champlain valley

**TWO BROTHERS TAPVERN** Trivia  
to 10 p.m. 4 p.m. Free

## northtown

**REE'S KINGS** Rock brunch  
to 11 a.m. Donations. The  
Kirkland (surrealist) 8 p.m.  
Contains rip to Hell (surreal) 10 p.m.  
Donations

**THE HUB PICKERS & PUB**  
Rock and country 4 p.m. to 4  
a.m. Free

**MATTWEEDEN** Chris Tapscott  
(surreal) 4 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free

**HOGS & PLACE** Band (surreal)  
(surreal) 4 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free

## MON.18

## burrlington area

**HALLGROVE** Family night  
to 10 p.m. 10 p.m. Free

**HOGS & PLACE** Rock brunch  
with local bands 4 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free

**VECTA** Metal Monday  
to 10 p.m. Free

**WINTER BEER** Jazz brunch  
with local bands 4 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free

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with local bands 4 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free

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with local bands 4 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free

**WINTER BEER** Jazz brunch  
with local bands 4 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free



SAT. 19.11 TUXON KORNELIUS (ROCK)

## Bumbles Bounce

We work out them a super group, cooey, but **TUXON KORNELIUS'** celebrity-obsessive and repertoire of rock classics make the group a must-see for the world's most famous bar band. Founded by Dave Matthews Band bass player Leland, the group is composed of members of Capital and Barnyard Lutes and features a mix of guest players including members of Rat, D.A. B. and Gabschick as well as actor Jason Biggs and Vermont State's Dew Dealer. Come say hi to the band this Saturday, March 18, when the band headlines the FirstEVOL Concert Series at the Embassy Arena at Glenora Mountain Resort in Ludlow.

## central

**CHARLES 2** Trivia Night 8  
p.m. Free

## northern

**HOGS & PLACE** Band brunch  
(surreal) 4 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free

## TUE.19

## burrlington area

**CURE METROPOLE** Band  
Set with local bands 4 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free

**HALLGROVE** Family night  
to 10 p.m. 10 p.m. Free

**HOGS & PLACE** Band brunch  
(surreal) 4 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free

**HOGS & PLACE** Band brunch  
(surreal) 4 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free

**HOGS & PLACE** Band brunch  
(surreal) 4 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free

**BLUE NORTHSTAR** Kelly  
James & the Brothers (rock) 8  
p.m. Free

**ON TAPBAR & HILL** Trivia  
with local bands 4 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free

**BLU MUSH PUB** Live music  
(surreal) 4 p.m. to 4 p.m. Free

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# Waste Matters

"High Trash," Fleming Museum of Art

**F**rench artist Marcel Duchamp was the first to present a humble object and claim it was "high art." Signed "R. Mutt" and titled "Fountain," the small Duchamp submitted to a 1917 exhibition as a legitimate work of modern art. It was dismissed as rubbish and not found the exhibition. Now, scholars refer to "Fountain" — the most notorious in a series of Duchamp's "readymades" — as a major landmark in 20th-century art, and replicas of his porcelain throne grace important museums around the world.

"High Trash," a current exhibit at the Fleming Museum of Art, shares some elements with Duchamp's readymades, requiring the viewer to look beyond the materials to see the art. One difference facing the beauty in Duchamp's work requires thinking each new art established along about it, whereas the artists in "High Trash" have deliberately manipulated junk to make it beautiful.

The exhibit is also an obvious commentary on consumerism and waste, a theme that curator Anne Marie MacLean Douglas (over at the Dover Art Institute) notes is not new, any more than is the concept of found-object art. But at the Fleming, she continues, "a new generation of artists" tackles the subject.

The result is an almost two-centuries exploration of environmental concerns by this crop of artists, punctuated by the University of Vermont's Jersey launch of a student-driven ban on the sale of bottled water on campus. Plastic bottles are a repeated motif in "High Trash" in one cheap toy, crumpled food wrappers and cigarette butts. There's nothing special about this stuff, but in the hands of these artists, it becomes compelling.

Many of the works in the exhibition are intricate and almost delicate, such as "Blossom Culture Roll Film Print," by Cuban-born American artist Alma Guerra and Norberto de la Pae. The *De Roussier* print, made of cast-off clothing and other discarded goods found in the trash bins of Miami's Little Haiti, has the unexpected elegance of a large-scale object intended to minimize scraps of cheap, printed polyester clothes "transformed" at the base of a lampost tree made of fabric, the cloth shining in the gallery lights. The work is beautifully constructed, even if a closer look reveals its low-cost origins.



Trash (out of sight)

## IS TRASH TURNED INTO ART STILL WORTHLESS? DOES IT BECOME ART BECAUSE THE ARTIST DEEMS IT SO?



Burlington artist Rebecca Schwartz's "Oikos Xing Cycle" is similarly striking, made of plastic bottles and bottle caps she has arranged in a flowing shape. A string of lights make the plastic glow cheerily, highlighting the borders that Schwartz notes are "at once so shiny, new and easy to acquire, and yet at the same time, so permanent and dangerous."

The underlying comment on consumerism comes in hardly subtle but "High Trash" conveys a multidimensional message that goes beyond guilt about our wastefulness

The exhibition design wisely gives its objects space to breathe (with just more than 20 works) and lets its viewers do the same.

There's a certain whyness in the exhibit's deliberate shifts of scale and perspective. From the *very* all of the works look beautiful and new. The sleek curves of Sylvia Garcia's "Fog" — a bounding, cutlike creature made of discarded plastic — highlight its motion rather than its one-off materials. Likewise, a block, flower-like sculpture on the wall (made of old car tires) catches the eye, while a grotesque shape constructed of

plastic clothes hangers remains nearby. An adorable baby bunny's "fur" turns out, on closer inspection, to be used cigarette filters.

The scale of these artworks can determine whether you admire them or are repulsed by their origins. Tina Roth's *Unspoolable* (for the tobacco bunny) offers the most striking example of impressionistic trickery with "Wash." What looks like a large scale beach scene pointing from the door of the gallery turns into a beach-worthy tableau as you approach it and make out the tiny, crumpled plastic figures Roth used to "print" the scene. Mismatched body parts are grafted onto figures from Disney movies and Happy Meal toys, creating a mishmash of once-familiar characters and trash. It's most beautiful — but not quite.

This inherent tension leads "High Trash" a way as, it's hard to take seriously a piece of the slightly twisted, surrealistic *Boxem* capacitor sculpture when his profile is rendered in candy wrappers and jelly beans and suspended in bubble wrap. From afar, his portrait does look a bit sinister, but there's a definite beauty of form and materials at play here.

The joke at the heart of the exhibit can just as easily cut both ways. Is trash turned into art still worthless? Does it become art because the artist deems it so? Duchamp would say yes.

There's no denying the beauty in this exhibition, even as the line between art and trash becomes less distinct as, for example, a meticulously constructed, remarkable city of used tea bags and paper from New York artist Max Liberman. She craves viewers to take home one of her bag, beautiful shreds — as long as they leave something in its place. Do the old grocery receipts and washed-up gum wrappers they have contributed thereby become art? If so, will Liberman incorporate these new discarded bits into work — or will they be buried for the trash bin when the exhibition closes?

The exhibit walls that leave carefully. On the one hand, the works are nearly all beautifully executed and visually stimulating. On the other hand, an undercurrent of environmental self-awareness undercuts subtle points each artist could add to the conversation.

LINDSAY J. WESTLEY

**F** High Trash? Open now at the Fleming Museum, UVM in Burlington through May 15. [Burlingtonmuseum.org](http://Burlingtonmuseum.org)



1



BURLINGTON AREA SHOWS &amp; Fairs

**MADE IN DENVER** An exhibit of new water landscape paintings by the youngest artist also includes works of older artists. Through March 31 at Main Buildings First & 3rd Galleries in Burlington. Info: 709-1231

**WILLIAM S. TAYLOR** "John Mitchell Douglas, An American Portrait," photographs of the artist, at 18401st by the 1st & 2nd & 3rd Galleries of the University of Northern Iowa. Through March 31 at the University of Northern Iowa Art Museum. Through March 30 at Bailey House Library in Burlington. Info: 636-3294

**WILSON, ART & THE PERFORMANCE OF LIFE** An exhibit of new water landscape paintings by the youngest artist also includes works of older artists. Through March 31 at Main Buildings First & 3rd Galleries in Burlington. Info: 709-1231

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN** An exhibit of new water landscape paintings by the youngest artist also includes works of older artists. Through March 31 at Main Buildings First & 3rd Galleries in Burlington. Info: 709-1231

**STANLEY'S AN EXHIBITION OF INTERIOR** Paintings and new photographs of the artist. Through March 31 at the University of Northern Iowa Art Museum. Through March 31 at Bailey House Library in Burlington. Info: 636-3294

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**Amber DeVoss** DeVoss discovered her identity as an artist early in life. Starting at age 11, she spent summers learning and experimenting with oil paints under the tutelage of her great-aunt, established artist and gallery coordinator Jane Goddard. Since then early exposure, DeVoss has fostered a richly diverse, abstract style all her own. This month at the Fletcher Free Library's Pooking Room she displays her "Tempest Collection" — all paintings on canvas that evoke the mysterious spirit of the world around us.

**HOW PEOPLE MAKE THINGS** is a hands-on exhibit by the artist. Through March 31 at the University of Northern Iowa Art Museum. Through March 31 at Bailey House Library in Burlington. Info: 636-3294

**IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER** Paintings by the artist. Through March 31 at the University of Northern Iowa Art Museum. Through March 31 at Bailey House Library in Burlington. Info: 636-3294

**JANE GODDARD** Paintings by the artist. Through March 31 at the University of Northern Iowa Art Museum. Through March 31 at Bailey House Library in Burlington. Info: 636-3294

**JOHN GODDARD** Paintings by the artist. Through March 31 at the University of Northern Iowa Art Museum. Through March 31 at Bailey House Library in Burlington. Info: 636-3294

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**Mick Colbeck** The last artist collection of paintings, Stafford artist Mick Colbeck reflected on the power of water in all its manifestations on the planet, and finally captures the liquid's reflective quality like art created for "Underwater" an exhibit at the Vermont Supreme Court in Montpelier, explains. "I have been thinking about water — about glaciers, about floods and hurricanes, about stone seagulls and sea walls, and its consequences, displaced populations and destroyed farmlands. I have been looking at water and down into water, rising on rocks and studying reflections." Colbeck's glimmering of paintings are on view through April 30. (Pictured: "Underwater Trees.")







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[sevendaysvt.com](http://sevendaysvt.com).





## Clark Derbes

The artist knows second Burlington for his site-specific works and signature geometric paintings and sculptures in a network of community-based projects, including at the Burlington State Park and the University of Vermont. Derbes is in full-throttle mode with his latest exhibition, "Free-Form: Art of the Future, Today." He and Johnson State College students are painting a wall at the campus Johnson State Memorial Gallery. The show also features some of Derbes' smaller works. In an upcoming exhibit titled "Time Travellers," opening March 30 at Rowe's West Branch Gallery & Sculpture Park, Derbes will show new chiselled carved and painted wood sculptures, featured "Analogique."

NORTH VERMONT CHRONICLE BY PATT

**CHRONICALLY AMBIGUOUS** Contemporary Brooklyn's images presented in the two-dimensional process by the Montreal State University by Richard professor through the University of Vermont. Through March 30 at the University of Vermont, 400-400-4000.

**CLIQUE ARTISTS/ARTISTS' VIEW OF BOSTON** The gallery's first ever group exhibition featuring the work of 15 artists, including 10 Vermont artists. Through March 30 at the University of Vermont, 400-400-4000.

**CONVEYANCES IN CURE** Outlets works by Jane Ruppert and Francis. Through April 30 at the University of Vermont, 400-400-4000.

**IMAGE, FACT AND PRESENT** A group exhibit of art in the independent by the community, also exhibition. Through April 30 at the University of Vermont, 400-400-4000.

**JAN TUCKER** Installation by Jane Tuck, an artwork of sculpture and light that addresses urban landscape in the University of Vermont. Through April 30 at the University of Vermont, 400-400-4000.

**REPLY ONLY** A multi-media work by artist and a painting. Through April 30 at the University of Vermont, 400-400-4000.

**LYNN CORBON & HAYDEN FURBER** Summer of Change: International of the University of Vermont. Through April 30 at the University of Vermont, 400-400-4000.

**SALLY ANN GIBBY GIBBY** Works of sculpture and painting. Through April 30 at the University of Vermont, 400-400-4000.

**PAT TURNER** Paintings in acrylic and wood. Through April 30 at the University of Vermont, 400-400-4000.

**DAVIDA ECKHART** Works of sculpture and painting by the artist. Through March 30 at the University of Vermont, 400-400-4000.

**SECOND THURSDAY ARTISTS GROUP EXHIBIT** Paintings by artist & artist. Through March 30 at the University of Vermont, 400-400-4000.

**IMAGINE: BUILD OF VIBRANT FUTURE** IMAGINE: Build of vibrant future by the artist. Through March 30 at the University of Vermont, 400-400-4000.

## southern

**JENNIFER FURBER** Works of sculpture and painting by the artist. Through March 30 at the University of Vermont, 400-400-4000.

## regional

**JOAN ANDREWS ECKHART** Works of sculpture and painting by the artist. Through March 30 at the University of Vermont, 400-400-4000.

**DAVID FURBER** Works of sculpture and painting by the artist. Through March 30 at the University of Vermont, 400-400-4000.

**DAVIDA ECKHART** Works of sculpture and painting by the artist. Through March 30 at the University of Vermont, 400-400-4000.

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## NOW PLAYING IN P.D.

**BARBERSHOP 2**★★★ (R) When a woman's car is hit by a carjacker, she's taken to a hospital. But when she's taken to a hospital, she's taken to a hospital. (10 min PG-13)

**JOAN MARCUS' VIOLETTA**★★★ The mother of the hit movie *Boys n the Hood* (1991) and writer of *Boys n the Hood* (1991) returns with a new movie about the life of a young woman in a poor neighborhood. (10 min PG-13)

## NEW ON VIDEO

**ERIN'S LAMENT**★★★ A woman and an Israeli band leader find love in a war-torn land. (10 min PG-13)

## movies you missed



## 78: The Boy

**This week in Movies: The Boy**★★★ (R) A young boy (Jesse Eisenberg) gives a tour of his home, which is a horror movie set.

On the night of July 2008, something had happened in the town of Clondy, Md., on the Chesapeake Bay. So bad that the government covered up the story, we're told. It took an intrepid, Wikipedia-like organization to bring us this collection of rescued footage documenting that day.

Our narrator is Doctor Thompson (Mother Duck), who was the only media presence in Clondy on the Bay— a college intern posting video to a local TV station's Web. When a man in a car appeared, and then another, she thought she was documenting Clondy's first serial killer.

As *78*'s viewers looked to the hospital with ugly looks, it became apparent the town was actually dealing with a smaller and more prolific murderer, originating in the polluted waters of the Bay...

MARGOT HARRISON

Find this and our Movies section at [sevendays.com](http://sevendays.com)

**CRUISE DU SOLEIL**★★★ (R) The sun is a world of the sun. (10 min PG-13)

**REPRODUCTION**★★★ (R) A woman and a man are in a relationship. (10 min PG-13)

**THE LIFE OF PI**★★★ (R) A young boy is in a relationship. (10 min PG-13)

**THE LIFE OF PI**★★★ (R) A young boy is in a relationship. (10 min PG-13)

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